

COUNTRY LIFE

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THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits
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WHOLESALE POULTRY REARING.

WE have an announcement to make to-day that ought to interest keenly those who can command a fair amount of capital and are willing to lay it out in a plan for rearing poultry on a really large scale. It is that Madame Jasper, a lady poultry keeper, well known to the Belgian Government and Belgian poultry circles, has made an agreement to write a series of articles for us explaining the Flemish system in which she was so successful until the German invasion brought her industry to an end. In this country the late Mr. Tegetmeier, a very able, thorough, conscientious man, but one with the most extreme prejudices, hindered the development of poultry keeping by vowing, in season and out of season, that a really satisfactory balance sheet had never been shown for a poultry farm. He did not add, as he should have done, that there was no reason in the world why this state of things should endure for ever. Obviously, the world would stand still if everybody who saw a formidable obstacle in front declared they could not pass and made no attempt to do so. Poultry keeping on a very large scale has proved remunerative in Belgium, and one feels sure it would do so in this country if the Belgian method were adopted. English poultry keepers are very little aware of their own shortcomings in this respect. Madame Jasper

says that before she began her business she made a motor tour round all the places where she thought it possible to learn anything about the craft, but omitted to come to England. "I had been here before," she explained, "and you could not teach me anything." We do enjoy a pre-eminence in the poultry world, but it is a pre-eminence for breeding and not for rearing. Our prize birds are capable of holding their own with those of any country in the world, but the art of getting birds ready for the table has not yet been achieved. Mr. Paynter has, indeed, made a remarkable effort in that way, but ill luck has dogged his footsteps. In Cheshire a number of baleful influences combined to hinder him from achieving the result he had set his mind on. Last year he was engaged in work of the same kind on the borders of Herts and Cambridge, but the war came with its disorganisation, and he was in a sense compelled to devote his energies to the production of eggs, which were much needed in the hospitals, instead of table birds. Even he, however, has not dreamed of carrying on the business on the scale and with the methods of Madame Jasper.

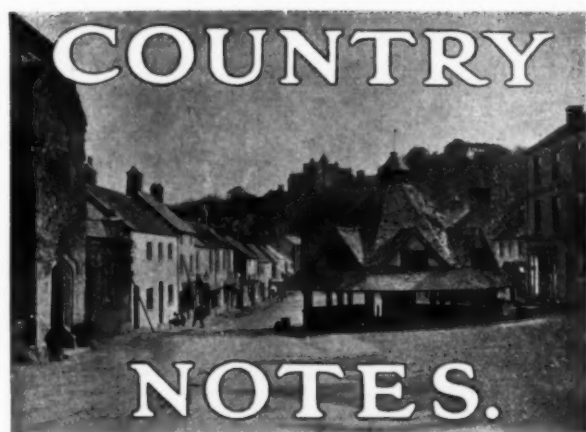
It would serve little purpose were we to describe this plan at the present moment. At any rate, it would be unfair to filter through another brain the story of the means adopted by this lady. We may say, however, that it is colossal in a way and, nevertheless, sound. Madame Jasper does not share the English belief that everything thrives best in natural conditions and under exposure to the open air. If we in this country thought the matter out, it would be necessary to agree with her. In Kent, for example, gardeners are accustomed to grow grapes which have no superior, if they have an equal, in any part of the world. They attain this end in spite of a climate fatal to all except the smallest and hardiest varieties. It is by their system of hothouses, perfected by generations of experience, that they are able to achieve such magnificent results. It is on the same principle that Madame Jasper has been in the habit of rearing chickens for the market. They are incubated and kept in artificially warmed houses laid with cement so that they can be kept in perfect cleanliness. The outbreak of disease among such chickens is well nigh impossible, and they are not incommoded by those parasites which feed so unrestrainedly on the outdoor chickens of this country. This would be in vain if Madame Jasper had not at the same time studied with scientific precision the effects produced by different kinds of food, so as to feed in a manner which involves a minimum of cost. And she claims that this is impossible if birds are exposed to the weather. In the latter case they have to use up a great part of the food they take in finding heat to withstand the coolness of the atmosphere.

The scheme would be interesting at any time, but our special reason for taking it up now is that there will be a great demand for chickens as an article of diet for wounded or convalescent soldiers. Obviously, birds, to serve the purpose thus indicated, would require to be young and tender, and a feature of the method as we understand it is that it brings them to a marketable stage of maturity at the age of about twelve weeks, when they are expected to weigh from three to five pounds. This quickness of maturity, if it can be achieved along with strict economy of feeding, must have the effect of so lowering the price of chickens, that they might very well become an ordinary article of diet. Indeed, that used to be a favourite contention of Mr. Paynter. He found from experience that it was possible to feed a chicken up to four pounds and sell it profitably at 7½d. a pound, or half a crown a chicken, which is not dear for family eating. Madame Jasper achieved more than this when she was engaged in chicken rearing at her home near Brussels, and we thought it would be well worth while getting her to explain the system for the benefit of English poultry keepers, especially as she achieved with eggs the same success as with young birds.

OUR FRONTISPIECE.

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of Lady Mary Parker, whose engagement is announced to the Hon. Lionel St. Aubyn, 6th Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps. Equerry to H.R.H. the Duchess of Albany.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



VERY great historical importance attaches to a letter which M. Poincaré addressed to King George on the eve of the war. It is, in the first place, a very serious and even tragical, communication. The President of France felt most acutely the danger in which his country stood, and his note is a last effort to maintain peace. He thought there was a chance that Germany would not proceed to extreme measures if she clearly understood that Great Britain, Russia and France were determined to stand or fall together. No doubt Germany would have drawn back if it had not been too late. We all of us remember the agitation of the German Chancellor and the consternation throughout Germany when it was understood that Great Britain would not forsake her Ally. But the Kaiser William had planned and prepared and committed himself so much that the war had to go on. It will be seen in the King's letter that Great Britain to the very last clung tenaciously to the hope of peace, and every phrase is calculated to promote it. The French papers have been very quick to recognise in this correspondence the most complete demonstration ever yet offered, that the war was Germany's doing and Germany's only. Every other nation in Europe knew that its interest lay in peace.

The Government will receive the support of all right-thinking citizens in its action in regard to Labour disputes. A new tribunal has been brought into existence for the purpose of settling them. The members are Sir George Askwith of the Board of Trade, Sir Francis Hopwood of the Admiralty and Sir George Gibb of the War Office. Employers and employed are alike notified that there should be no striking or locking out in places where guns, stores or other military equipment are being manufactured. The only reflection one can make is that such a reminder should not have been needed. It devolves at the present moment on every citizen of the Empire to exert himself as strenuously as though he were fighting in the trenches. The fate of the Empire is just as much in the hands of the worker as it is in those of the soldier. Moreover, in this particular war the operations are conducted against an enemy of democracy. Germany under similar circumstances would take very ruthless measures with those who raised a Labour dispute at this critical moment, and the whole spirit of that Empire lies in the over-ruling of "the herd," as Nietzsche denominated the working classes. The battle Great Britain and her Allies are fighting is that of democracy against military rule, and it behoves all those who are employed in factories to show the same spirit that the men are showing at the front. We are sure that the Labour leaders have a lively appreciation of this fact, and if they would bring their influence and authority to bear the result would certainly be beneficial.

Even as we were writing the phrase in last week's number, "The war is about to enter upon a new stage," preparations had already been made for bombarding the Dardanelles, and the great guns of the Inflexible and Agamemnon opened on the forts on Friday morning. The enterprise to which the Allies are committed is a formidable one, but we have no doubt that before Lord Fisher and Mr. Winston Churchill decided upon it, they had counted the cost. It is of the greatest importance not only to Russia, but to the neutral states of Europe and to our other Allies, that a sea route should be opened, and probably that by way of the Dardanelles is the most practicable one. Russia has the results of a bountiful harvest awaiting export, and if she were enabled to send it, one result would be a decided fall in the

present high price of wheat. But the attack on the Dardanelles will serve other purposes. If successful, it spells the end of Constantinople as a Turkish town. For many generations Constantinople has been the bone of contention between Russia and Turkey. The present war has brought out in strong prominence the importance of the Straits to our Ally, and, after the Turks' rally to the side of Germany, there is no one who will stand between the Russians and the capture of a town they have desired and the sea passage which is necessary to their commerce.

In a document which has been placed in our hands, dealing with the plans for blinded soldiers and sailors, drawn up by the committee of which Mr. C. Arthur Pearson is chairman, the eye is arrested by the passage, "At The Blinded Soldiers' and Sailors' Hostel the men will learn to be blind." It is a pregnant phrase, and meaning that they will be taught how to read, write, do typewriting and other things which will be useful in their altered condition. They will have much to learn even in such simple things as dressing, undressing and eating. For the purpose of teaching them, the co-operation of a number of cheery blind folk has been secured, and when the rudiments, as it were, have been mastered, energy will be directed to discovering the occupation for which each individual soldier or sailor is most fitted, and the best possible arrangements will be made for their training and start. Thus any blinded soldier or sailor who cares to avail himself of the opportunities will be placed in a position which will enable him to augment his pension and give him a fresh interest in life. A magnificent house, with fourteen acres of gardens and grounds, has been placed at the disposal of the committee by Mr. Otto Kahn, the well known American financier, but until certain structural arrangements are completed a temporary hostel has been lent by Mrs. Lewis Hall.

HOLIDAY.

My soul slipped off a-pleasuring,
From this land of southern heat
To the home-land, grey and sweet,
Went my soul with eager feet,
Time nor distance measuring.
Left a sunrise, clouds allame,
For a sunset, faintly fair;
Down the well known path she came,
Through the shadowy air.
Lingered where the bluebell sea
Washes through the little wood,
For a tranced moment stood . . .
Then returned to me. ISABEL BUTCHART.

No surprise will be felt at the announcement made by Lord Fortescue that the Board of Trade is investigating the work done by the Boys' Country Work Society with a view of drawing up a scheme for the employment of boys. This Society is playing a very useful part. During last year it placed 253 boys on farms, and altogether, since its establishment in 1905, 1,100 have been sent to employment in the country districts. Of that number about half continue to work on the farms, while 100 have enlisted for naval or military service, and about an equal number have migrated. The remainder have found their way back to London, and been absorbed in town employment. The physique of boys must be very greatly improved by being sent to do farm work at fourteen. They earn £5 or £6 a year, with food, lodging and some help in clothing, and when they get a little older receive from 5s. to 8s. 6d. a week, with board and lodging. The expense to which the Society is put works out at a trifle over £2 a boy. The town populations would be greatly invigorated if this practice were adopted throughout the country. When a boy is growing, say, from the age of fourteen to nineteen, an open-air life and plenty of plain country fare may be the making of him. If he does return to the industrial ranks he is pretty certain to do so a more vigorous man than he would otherwise have been.

Sir Edward Ward has forwarded to us an interesting letter from Mr. Henry Chaplin on the subject of providing books for the Camps Lending Library, of which Sir Edward is the chairman, and the hon. secretary is the Hon. Mrs. Anstruther. It is easy to forget the value placed upon books by men in the Army. In the trenches, an officer writes, "Books are even more appreciated than tobacco, for they pass the weary hours of day when only a few have to keep a lookout, and the rest sit at the bottom of the trench having nothing to do." Mr. Chaplin's appeal is directed principally

to those who are maintaining the hunts in different districts, but many other classes will be equally interested. Subscriptions are not asked for, but will be properly applied if sent. The main request is for volumes suitable for soldiers' reading. It should be remembered that in the Army are men of very diversified tastes and degrees of education, so that no good book is likely to fail in finding an appreciative reader.

It is difficult, even with the exercise of the greatest sympathy, to understand why Mr. Henry Chaplin believes that "there must be a shortage of wheat whatever happens." The only possibilities to which he alludes are that the Russian Army may make a further progress in East Prussia or they may make their way through the Carpathians to the great plain of Hungary. Neither of these events should affect the supply of wheat to Great Britain, or to any other part of Europe except the countries immediately affected. By the time this year's crop of wheat comes to be harvested Germany and Austria will be very effectually blockaded. The Board of Agriculture based the estimate which Mr. Chaplin was criticising on an increase in the wheat area of Italy, Canada, the United States and India. They also reckon that although the Argentine has been delayed in shipping its very abundant harvest, this will eventually increase the supply, and, of course, should a port be opened up for Russian exportation there are about 10,000,000 quarters available for Western Europe. One may doubt whether the price will fall below 60s., and there is very little chance of it dropping to 50s.; but the world at the present moment has an abundant supply of wheat, and will have a still greater one next year.

It will be noticed that in our Correspondence columns a farmer indignantly repudiates the suggestion that his class out of large profits is not paying the labourer better. We are very glad to get such a letter, as whatever is said in these columns about farmers is written in the most friendly and sympathetic spirit. It has been frequently shown in our columns that the cost of feeding stuffs has increased enormously, and also the general expenses of cultivation. It has also been argued that the farmer had to put up with such very small profits for a long series of years that he is deserving of some reward now. We remember very well how delighted wheat growers were when, after having been below 20s. a quarter, wheat rose again to 30s.—a price not then regarded with the disdain with which our correspondent regards it to-day. Taking the year by itself, it is possible that farm profits are not so enormous, although we do not see what the cost of feeding stuffs has to do with the profit on wheat that was practically harvested before the war broke out. It affects the stock-keeper, but not the grower of cereals. Sir Howard Frank put the farmer's case with equal knowledge and moderation in a letter published in the *Morning Post* of February 18th. With the view there expressed we agree most cordially. His attitude to wages is that they should be raised "but not to a fictitious level."

Although many who are deeply interested in the Shire horse were too seriously engaged elsewhere to muster at the annual show in the Agricultural Hall, which opened on Tuesday, there was, nevertheless, a great gathering of connoisseurs, and the number of entries did not fall so low as had been expected. The difference was observable all the way down the classes. Another point was that the decrease was largely of horses entered for sale. Those entered solely for exhibition were merely thirty-four fewer than in 1914. The War Office will supply the explanation, as at an early period it commandeered for draught purposes a large number of the horses that normally would have been put up for sale in February. Needless to say, the quality of the exhibits was excellent. That was guaranteed by the fact that, practically speaking, every important breeder of Shire horses was represented. It was said by many of those who were present that the Society had done well to maintain the continuity of the exhibition. The horse breeder at this juncture is doing a very important duty to his country, whether he be engaged in providing chargers for the officers or heavy cart-horses for military haulage.

After the heavy horses come the light. Next week the Agricultural Hall will be occupied successively by exhibitors of thoroughbred stallions, hunters and ponies. This is a variation on the practice of former years, but it was necessitated by the exceptional circumstances of the moment. The two councils, namely, those of the Hunters Improvement and National Pony Societies, decided that it was essential to preserve the continuity of the spring shows,

but resolved to hold a joint show with one catalogue, and with equal privileges of admission to the members of both Societies on the three days. We are glad to notice that a first rate entry has been received, comprising 130 thoroughbred stallions and 270 other exhibits, including hunter brood mares and young stock, polo, Welsh and Shetland ponies. Much of this is, no doubt, due to the fresh interest that has been aroused in our stock of light horses owing to the war. That is the inference which would naturally be drawn from the correspondence in our columns. We hope the public will warmly back up the enterprise of the councils, and show their practical interest in our stock of light horses by visiting the Agricultural Hall in large numbers.

A letter in our Correspondence columns this week will go a long way to make the densest intelligence realise that a landing or raid on the East Coast may be a desperate, but is at least a possible, move on the part of the enemy. The communication is illustrated by a photograph of a five-barred gate with a white arrow painted upon it, showing the direction which fugitives should take in case of emergency. According to a local paper, this was done in answer to an appeal by a taxpayer of Saffron Walden. An agile-witted urchin has put the common interpretation on it by scribbling the legend, "Run this way."

Many of our readers will rejoice to find Mrs. Violet Jacob's "Songs of Angus" reviewed in another part of the paper. None of the many distinguished contributors of verse to *COUNTRY LIFE* has developed a finer individuality than can be traced in these poems. Naturally, it is a source of pride that, with, we imagine, a solitary exception, they all appeared first in these pages. The first we printed was "The Howe o' the Mearns," which was three years afterwards published in the *Cornhill Magazine*. The explanation was that Mrs. Jacob had sent the verses to this office in the handwriting of an amanuensis and minus her signature, so that we failed to discover the author till the verses appeared in our monthly contemporary. Mrs. Jacob in the meanwhile had been out of the country and failed to notice that her poem had appeared. It was the first, and perhaps the best, of a series of poems that qualifies the writer of them to a place beside Lady Nairn, Miss Jean Elliot and the other great Scottish songstresses of the eighteenth century.

TRAINING.

Just ten years back, his soldiers were of tin—

His cannons, lead; his cannon balls, dried peas.

And he would marshal armies—fight—and win—

In earnest war with forces such as these:

Just ten years back.

Just ten years back, his boyish curly hair

Was tossed with pride when tasks, at length, were done:

Copies were written—sums were worked with care—

And Daddy praised his plucky schoolboy son,

Just ten years back!

Just ten years back, he learnt that duty's way

Is, sometimes, hard: that discipline is right:

Standing, as soldier, in the ranks to-day,

He knows the worth of childhood's training fight,

Just ten years back!

L. GARD.

Lady Wantage has taken the bull by the horns, if we may use the simile in a matter specially pertaining to cows. She and a few friends have elaborated a plan for training strong, healthy young women of about the age of eighteen to milk and do the lighter part of farm work. The period of discussion has elapsed and Lady Wantage is now inviting applicants for her course of training. Obviously, the sooner the matter is attended to the better it will be for everybody. There is nothing surer than that workers during the seeding season, which would begin now if only the weather would permit it, will be extremely scarce. If advantage is taken of all the feminine help that can be obtained and even if children are called upon to assist, there will still not be too many hands for the task, and it is work that in the interests of the country must be done. Whatever may happen during the summer and early autumn, it is obvious that this country must be dependent for a great many eatables upon what is grown here instead of what is imported from abroad. The power of both Belgium and France to do this is being greatly curtailed, and at the same time the demand has increased and is increasing. Lady Wantage, therefore, deserves to be supported in her efforts.

SPORT WITH THE SCATTER-GUN IN THE YANGTSE VALLEY.—I.

By THE LATE CAPTAIN H. P. E. TUDOR WILLIAMS, R.N.

[Our readers will receive with melancholy interest this fine article on game and wild-fowl shooting by the late Captain of the "Hawke," who went down when his ship was torpedoed in the North Sea last October. He had only been commissioned to the "Hawke" on August 1st, 1914. We had thought to have him as a frequent contributor, but the end came suddenly to the career of this good sportsman and faithful servant of the King.—Ed.]

A SHORT account of the sport obtainable during the winter season in the valley of the great Yangtse Kiang, in pursuit of small game, may prove of interest to those readers who are chiefly accustomed to the more or less artificially reared birds of the

United Kingdom and perhaps also to others who are themselves old China "hands," and who may, I hope, in the perusal of these pages, culled at random from an old shooting diary, recall many pleasant days spent, perchance, in brief respite from desk or office, with gun in hand and dog at heel, on the very spots to which they refer: then, doubtless, they easily surpassed the moderate bags which I have helped to gather, and which they may be inclined to treat with scorn.

To such I would say: "Be not hypercritical, but remember that times change, and are in the process of doing so in China at the present moment more rapidly than elsewhere; and moreover, what with the evils of cold storage, and greater facilities for travelling, places which only a few years ago were a sportsman's Paradise are now more or less cleaned out, and birds are becoming scarcer and more shy every year." Science, in the form of up-to-date refrigerating machinery, has proved a greater enemy to the shooter in the vicinity of the big commercial ports than even the myriads of crows and magpies which infest the country. Considering also the numerous hawks, civet cats, weasels and other vermin, it is indeed a matter of marvel how so many birds actually do manage to escape their multitudinous enemies.

As it may not at first be apparent how it is that cold storage is the bane of the shooter, I must explain that since the advent of refrigerating plant at all the larger ports (where there is always a great demand for game), John Chinaman has found out that it is a much more paying business, if he can get possession of any sort of bundock, to stalk and slay by any and all means within his power every manner of game bird, from the canny bean-goose to the elusive snipe, and dispose of them to numerous dealers (the Shanghai market alone is said to absorb over a thousand pheasants a week), than it is to perform the "bitter labour" which is the usual lot of the country coolie on the not very remunerative wage of 20 cents for an average day of fourteen hours.

Shooting pheasants and disposing of them for 40 cents apiece is a much more paying and attractive means of gaining a livelihood. As an instance of the way in which

the country is being depleted of game, an official of the Pukow-Tientsin Railway told me that he had seen an invoice for 700 pheasants sent down in one day. These had doubtless been collected from the various "shootie men" along the line, and would be placed in cold storage until required

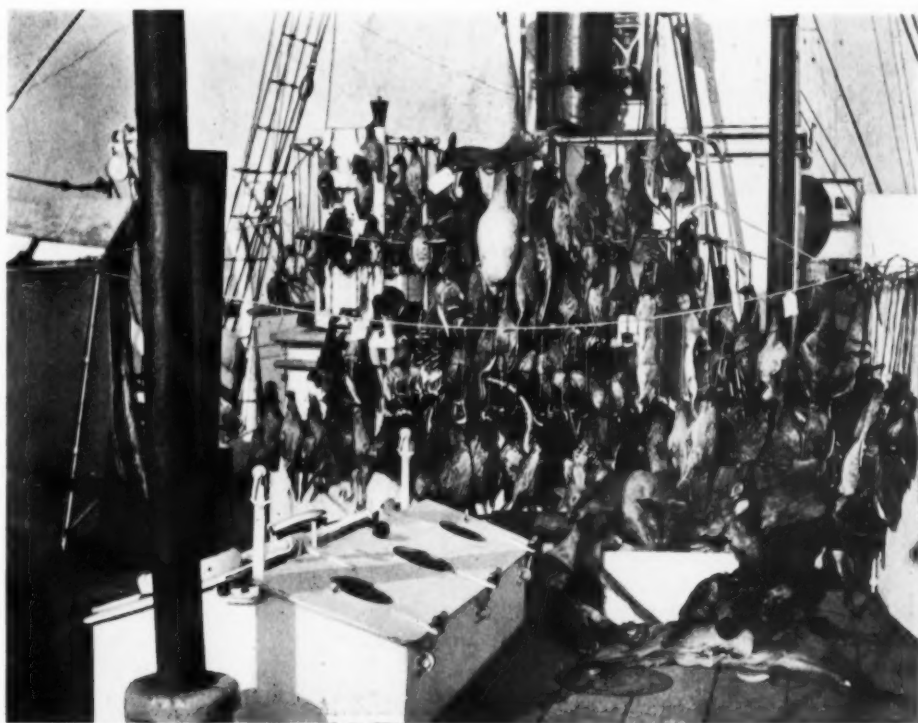


A BAG OF GREY LAG GEESE.

(The late Captain Tudor Williams in the centre of the group.)

for sale. I have met Chinamen out with guns, sometimes two or three together, all the way up the Yangtse from Woosung to Hankow, and even higher up the river.

John is not particular about such a trifle as "close time" (which does not legally exist in this country), and consequently he has no hesitation about knocking a bird on the head while sitting on the nest, for to him, whether



THE RESULT OF TWO DAYS' SHOOTING.

shot legitimately, netted or clubbed, "a bird's a bird for a' that" when it represents cash.

The Yangtse River is navigable for the largest ocean carriers during the high-water season (summer) for a distance of 600 miles from the sea, and for medium-sized steamships of not more than 13ft. draught for 1,000 miles from the mouth. As we keep a few sloops and gunboats constantly patrolling the river for the protection of trade, life and property at the different ports, it will be understood that such a billet offers unique opportunities to anyone who is a shooter when one considers that the country is prolific of deer, pheasant, hares, partridge, woodcock, quail, snipe. Even in winter it simply teems with fowl, from the wild swan to the little mandarin duck, such things as plover or pigeon being as silver in the days of Solomon.

At the same time, like most things in this world that are worth the getting, a bag requires a deal of looking for, and you must not run away with the idea that you have only got to put your gun together, step outside into the backyard, and knock over a couple of bean-geese right and left whenever you feel so inclined.

No! You must know the right place to go for the particular bird that you are looking for; then you have to find him, flush him, shoot him and gather him, failure of any one component resulting in "No bird." After all, this, to my mind, constitutes the real sport of shooting in its highest terms, although it was the form practised by such obsolete old gentlemen as our grandfathers.

There is as much difference between the wild Mongolian pheasant found in the Yangtse Valley and the home-bred variety which we watch from infancy till the moment we endeavour to pull him out of the sky, as there is between the proverbial chalk and cheese; the former is a bigger, stronger and infinitely more handsome bird than the latter, besides not being so like a spring chicken to eat.

As may be anticipated from the variety of game that is to be found, the nature of the country along the valley presents great variety. In the low-lying land which is characteristic of the lower Yangtse, there are vast expanses of reed beds which are a great obstacle to shooting, as it is a desperate task to force your way through them for any distance, since the reeds grow so thickly and your hands get cut to pieces very quickly without gloves on.

It is impossible to shoot when among them, for if a wounded bird drops in a patch, unless in a very small one, it is ten to one that you will ever see him again, since it is difficult cover for a dog to work in, while a "runner" can get along at a good speed.

When duck shooting, there are often 10in. or 12in. of water underfoot, and a wounded duck is generally also a lost bird, especially if he is a "yellow-bill," as this species when hard hit has a habit of diving down to the bottom, hanging on to a piece of weed and quietly dying there—where he remains. If he has got to give up the ghost, he might just as well do it in a gentlemanly manner at the surface, so as to be interred in the usual place with all the honours of an orange salad.

The reeds, however, have their uses, such as affording good cover at the edges of the ponds for fowling; and also, when the river has fallen and the reed beds are dry, they give excellent cover for pheasants and woodcock, both of which are always to be found in them after all the grass has been cut and other cover is scarce, *i.e.*, about the beginning of December.

During the winter months the number of duck and teal about the river is incredible, but they are very shy and hard



MY JACK TAR LOADER AND COOLIE GAME CARRIER.

to get at, owing to being shot at by all and sundry. Steaming up the river, in unfrequented reaches they are often so thick as to look like an island in the distance, and I have stood on the wall of the old city of Nanking at dusk when the spectacled teal were coming over literally in flocks of thousands. This teal is very strong on the wing, in my opinion being much faster than a driven partridge, and the noise that these enormous flights make in passing



IN CHARGE OF WATER BUFFALOES.

overhead must be heard to be believed. It is like nothing so much as the roar of two express trains passing through a station at the same time, and the density of the packs is such that I have known a man with no pretensions at all to being a shot who, by the simple process of letting go

both barrels into the middle of one, actually succeeded in gathering eight, and that in the dusk without the aid of a dog. At this particular place it must be understood that the birds are not just dropping to feed, but are *en route* for some distant haunt, travelling high, and it is only because the wall of the city is about 150ft. above the river level at this point that they pass close enough overhead to be within shot.

To return to the country, the native farmers afford the greatest ingenuity in keeping the paddies flooded in the hottest weather. By means of a long, narrow trough, which is fitted with paddles attached to an endless chain passing over a roller at each end, and actuated by a crank turned by either hand or foot, they will raise water from one level to another and, in the course of a day or two, empty quite a large pond by means of sluices and dams. The water is then kept at the required level over acres of paddy, unless, as sometimes happens, there is an exceptionally long spell of dry weather, when, a drought ensuing, the ponds are soon exhausted, and all that remains for the unfortunate native is to sit down and starve. In the famine years caused by drought, and in



COOLIES AS BEATERS.

of such a burst; as far as the eye could see, nothing but a desolation of muddy water was visible where a week before was a rolling expanse of ripening rice. On this occasion hundreds of square miles were flooded, and all because the local officials were squabbling about the repair of the bund until the water had risen to the level of the breach and it was too late.

Ground cover, of excellent quality, is afforded by several species of grass, which grow luxuriantly about knee high almost everywhere on the uncultivated hillsides, together with bamboo scrub and brushwood. As a rule, the land is closely cultivated up to the hill foot, the usual crops being cotton, wheat, maize, millet, pea nuts and vegetables. The trouble about cover as regards pheasant and cock shooting is that there is either too much or too little, as, before the grass is cut, it is so thick and high that birds can lie like stones in perfect security within a foot or two of one, and if you are working with a dog they will often run on for miles without flushing. On the other hand, no sooner is the grass ripe and dry than an army of men, women and children appear armed with sickles, and in an incredibly short space of time the ground is as bare as the palm of your hand; then it is that the pheasants betake themselves to the uncut reed beds, only coming out in the early mornings and evenings to feed.

It will thus be easily understood that the most satisfactory way of tackling the problem is to beat, but, again, this is no easy job owing to the limited number of intelligent beaters available who understand what is required of them; also the size and shape of the coverts make it very difficult to isolate a section and beat it without leaving a loophole for the birds to escape by, which they will certainly do if you give them half a chance. One of the most satisfactory methods of gathering a few is, when the grass cutting is in progress, to make for the isolated patches not yet cut and stamp them out carefully, with the aid of a dog if possible.

spite of relief works organised on a large scale (needless to say, chiefly by foreigners), tens, if not hundreds, of thousands die of sheer starvation. Another cause of distress is the bursting of the river bund during flood and consequent inundation of the whole countryside. I myself have seen the effect



THE OLD MAN OF MUD FORT CREEK.



RIVER FISHING—THE CHINESE WAY.

"SEALED OF THE TRIBE OF BEN."

"GOOD wine needs no bush." Mrs. Violet Jacob offers in this volume a wine of which the character and value are not indicated by the preface. Mr. Buchan is no doubt a man of culture, but it is culture "pitten in wi' a spoon," as they say in his native idiom, whereas the poetry in this small volume is distinguished beyond all else by its free spontaneous natural flow. The true interest in it is the revival in the person of Mrs. Jacob of a type of woman once produced freely on Scottish soil. For her counterpart we have to go back to the eighteenth century. Then Edinburgh was indeed the modern Athens, and the ladies who presided at the tea-tables where the *literati* were wont to gather had no exact parallel in Europe—the nearest approach being furnished by France, which was then as ever akin to Scotland. But the great difference lay in the exceeding homeliness of the Scottish lady and a humour, pawkiness, inherent drollery peculiarly her own. She took a pride in using the "braid Scots accent," and it was a most expressive and beautiful tongue as spoken by those clever widely read women. What applied to Edinburgh in particular applied to Scotland in general. Never did so many fine women poets flourish so close in time to one another. They did not make a business of writing poetry like some of our modern literary women. Some, indeed, achieved immortality by means of verse exceeding light in bulk. Jean Elliot left behind her only one song, "The Flowers of the Forest," but it gave her undying fame. Lady Anne Lindsay at the age of twenty-one wrote "Auld Robin Gray" and nothing afterwards, yet she also stands secure among the immortals. Mrs. Grant of Carron, who must not be confounded with Sir Walter's friend of the same name, is known only by her song to the ancient "Ruffian's Rant" "Roy's Wife of Aldavalloch." In each case lyric genius followed its own bent. There is no likeness or similarity between these three poems. One is a lament for old, unhappy far off things, another part of the *lacrimæ rerum*, the third an outburst of rollicking fun and high spirits. Lady Nairne in her person combined all three. "The Land o' the Leal" is as touching as "Auld Robin Gray," "The Laird of Cockpen" as laughable as "Roy's Wife" and the place of Mrs. Jacob is beside that of Lady Nairne. That is a real claim to make for her, but the more it is thought about the more apparent will be its validity. I have had nearly all of these poems through my hands since the first of them (and perhaps the best), "The Howe o' the Mearns," was published about ten years ago, and have been familiar since childhood with the verse of Lady Nairne and her contemporaries, and this conclusion was not arrived at in a hurry. Nor does my individual judgment stand alone. It has been endorsed by the best Scottish critics.

But there has been no imitation—no attempt as far as can be seen at a close study. Mrs. Jacob is herself and no other. No one coming on these verses without a signature would for a moment attribute them to Lady Nairne, and yet they are of the same spirit as "The Auld Hoose."

"Gin I mind myself an' toil for the lave o' my days
While I've een to see,
When I'm auld an' done wi' the fash o' their English ways
I'll come hame to dee;
For the lad dreams aye o' the prize that the man'll get,
But he lives an' lairns,
An' it's far, far 'ayont him still—but it's farther yet
To the Howe o' the Mearns.

Laddie, my lad, when the hair is white on yer pow
An' the work's put past,
When yer hand's owre auld an' heavy to haud the plough
I'll win hame at last.
And we'll bide our time on the knowes whaur the broom stands braw
An' we played as bairns,
Till the last lang gloamin' shall creep on us baith an' fa'
On the Howe o' the Mearns."

There is no surer mark of true poetry as distinguished from clever verse than the ability to express the most intense feeling without some touch that suggests rhetoric and thus diminishes the conviction of sincerity. It is the doom of the fluent and unskilled rhymsters to ruin what they touch. With them strong sentiment is distorted into sentimentality, patriotism into "bleat," and pathos runs naked. Humour is the worst trap of all, since, being overdone, it spoils itself and spoils all it comes in contact with.

Not only does Mrs. Jacob emerge unscathed from these hard tests, but while holding all the elements of passion, humour and pathos in control, she is also able to infuse into her lines a singularly modern pictorial quality and to make the vocabularies sing the song that is being lifted in her mind.

The most passionate of her numbers is "Tam o' the Kirk." It ends thus:

"He canna pray; but there's nane i' the kirk will heed him
Whaur he sits sae still his lane at the side o' the wa',
For nane but the reid rose kens what my lassie gie'd him—
It an' us twa!
He canna sing for the sang that his ain he'll raises,
He canna see for the mist that's afore his een,
And a voice drouns the hale o' the psalms an' the paraphrases,
Cryin' 'Jean, Jean, Jean!'"

For Scottish drollery the first place among these poems must be accorded to "The Beedle o' Drumlee," but it is "The Gowk" that gives the most realistic picture of Scottish peasant life.

"Tib, my auntie's a deil to wark,
Has me risin' afore the sun;
Aince her heid is abune her sark
Then the clash o' her tongue's begun!

Warslin', steerin' wi' hens an' swine,
Naucht kens she o' a freend o' mine—
But the Gowk that bides i' the woods o' Dun
He kens him fine!"

There is a verse in "The Water-hen" that goes humming through the mind; but we doubt if it would have this effect without the context:

"As I gae'd doon by the toon when the day was springin'
The Baltic brigs lay thick by the soundin' quay
And the riggin' hummed wi' the sang that the wind was singin',
'Free—gang free,
For there's mony a load on shore may be skailed at sea!'"

It would be easy to say more, but the rest may be left to the reader. Here in this book are collected about a score of poems, none long and the majority short, making in all less than an hour's reading. Yet they are enough to justify the admission of the writer of them to that goodly company of women poets who imparted distinction to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

P. A. G.

SHIRES AT ISLINGTON.

AS the show only opened on Tuesday, it is not possible for us this week to give more than a general impression. One was glad, however, to find that the inside of the Agricultural Hall presented very much the same appearance that it has done in previous years on judging day. There was one noticeable difference in the spectators, however, among the line of men who surrounded the arena in which Messrs. Green, Eadie and Mackereth inspected the exhibits and weighed their comparative merits, there was a considerable sprinkling of men in khaki. The majority of these were privates, and it was easy to gather from the scraps of their conversation that could be overheard that a considerable proportion of them had been before the war engaged in some of the large stables. They mentioned by name several of the horses in those large classes taken after midday, and seemed well aware of their defects and qualities. It was evident from the faces of the spectators that the majority of them were countrymen who had come up to London especially for the Show.

Indeed, the first day is the one most attractive to experts, the general public preferring, as a rule, to visit the Hall after the awards have been made. According to the figures supplied by the Shire Horse Society, there was a falling away in the number of entries, but no one would have thought of this who watched the judging of the early classes. In the first class, that of stallions foaled in the year 1914, there were no fewer than forty-eight entries. Several were from His Majesty the King and Lord Rothschild. In the second class, that for stallions foaled in 1913, there was a still larger entry, amounting to no fewer than fifty-seven. And as the average of excellence was very high, it may easily be conceived that judging proceeded slowly.

In the third class, that for stallions foaled in the year 1912, there was a still greater number of entries, there being no fewer than seventy-seven claimants. Older stallions were not so numerous. Still, even in the aged section—that is, for stallions of any height ten years old and upwards—there were seven entries. It is evident that agricultural business is going on as usual, since there was quite the usual number of industrial stalls and exhibitions. Among other novelties we noticed Mr. Seeley's tiller, which is now being shown for the first time. It is an ingenious machine, with gear suitable for the three necessary and the fourth advisable cultivation.

We noticed that it attracted a very great deal of attention from the Canadian visitors, and in conversation one of them made a remark that while there is still a vast amount of virgin soil in the Dominion which will grow a fair crop of wheat with the easiest and most primitive cultivation, there is a growing quantity of land on which the scratching that served the purpose on virgin soil is no longer a form of cultivation that will yield practical results. The time has come when the Canadian fields must be manured and cultivated as intensively as they are in England. The Canadians are extremely interested in the great Shires, although up to the present there has not been the export trade which breeders in this country might reasonably expect; there are evidently Canadians who think that the introduction of cart-horse blood into the Dominion might have the effect of greatly increasing the working power of their horses. Such as we spoke to did not seem to meditate breeding Shires, but were of the opinion that by using them they could obtain a valuable cross, combining weight and hardness.

THROUGH THE LAND OF COSSACK AND KIRGHIZ.

V.—ON THE FRONTIER OF CHINA.

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM.

KOPAL is 825 miles from a railway station and one of the last places on earth; a town without an inn, without a barber; a place you could run round in a quarter of an hour, and yet having jurisdiction over an immense tract of territory along the Russian frontier of China. I came there late one evening and found the post-house crowded with Chinamen; Chinamen on the two beds, on the floor, in the passage; chopsticks on the table. They were all travellers on the road to Peking, making their way slowly northward to the Trans-Siberian Railway.

At once one of those who occupied a bed got up, apologised, and vacated his sleeping place—offering it to me. Despite my refusal, he took off his blanket and quilt and spread them on the floor instead. His humility was touching—especially in contrast to my own instinctive loathing of a bed on which Chinese had lain. Fortunately I was not tired.

It was only nine o'clock, and I had noticed as I came into the town a considerable flare of lights, a large white tent and a notice of a Chinese circus. A Chinese circus was something not to be missed in this empty and outlandish country, so I put down my pack in the post-house and went out to see the performance. It was something truly original, a piquant diversion after a long day's journeying in the wastes and wilds of the mountains of Alai Tau.

It was a circular tent, small enough for a circus tent, having only three rows of seats around the arena. The price to sit down was thirty copecks; to stand behind, fifteen copecks. Soldiers came in free, and there were some thirty of them with their dull peasant faces and dusty khaki uniforms. Near the entrance there was a box covered with red bunting, free for the Chief of Police and his friends. The Chief of Police has a free box at nearly every local entertainment in Russia—he can permit or forbid the show. There were three musicians—Russian peasants, paid a shilling a night, I understand—and they gave value for money unceasingly on a concertina, a violin and a balalaika. The public on the bare, rickety forms ringed round the as yet empty stage numbered from 100 to 120, and were a mixture of Russians, Tartars and Kirghiz. All the Russian officers and officials of the town seemed to be there and accompanied by their smartly dressed wives and daughters. The Tartar merchants looked grim in their black skull caps, their women queenly, with little crowns on the tops of their heads and long veils

falling over their hair and their backs. There was a row of these crowned Tartar women together; a row also of Kirghiz women in high white turbans wrapped about their broad brows. There were colonists and their *babas*—open-faced, simple-souled peasant women who came to be petrified by the seeming devilry of the heathen Chinese. To them the fact that the Chinese are heathen—not Christian—is no joke but a fierce reality. They look upon the Chinese as being comparatively near akin to devils.

Naphtha lamps swung uneasily from the high beams of the tent, and flung unequal volumes of light from dangerous looking ragged flames. The sandy arena and all the eager people round were brightly shown in the plenitude of light.

The first item on the programme was not particularly striking. A bell was rung and a little Chinaman in black

came out and twirled and juggled a tea-tray on a chopstick. He was followed by a Russian clown with painted face, old hat and yellow wig, who proceeded to be very serious and show the public various tricks. He had three Chinese servants and the fun consisted in their stealing his things and spoiling his efforts. Finally he took a big stick and chased them round and round the arena—to the great delight of all the children present.

The clown's turn ended, there came

forward a very handsome Chinese in black satin knee breeches, tight stockings, scarlet jersey and English collar and tie. He was rather tall, had a big womanish face, gleaming teeth and long black hair. He walked jauntily in little slippers and carried a handful of ten knives. Another Chinaman came out with an old tree trunk, which he held up on end. A child came and stood up against the trunk. The handsome Chinese then stood and flung the knives as if to pin the boy to the wood, and he planted them between the child's arm and his body, over his arm, between his legs and beside his legs, on each side of his neck, on each side of his ears and over his head—and all the time as he flung them he smiled. He repeated his feat, placing all the knives round about the boy's head, never raising the skin.

No. 4 was the owner of the troupe, an old fellow in a light blue voluminous smock and long pig-tail. He conjured a platter of biscuits and cakes, glasses, a teapot, a steaming samovar, all out of nothingness, inviting the public to come and have tea with him, and talking an amusing broken Russian.



A CHINESE PRAYING-HOUSE AT DJARKENT.



ON THE CENTRAL ASIAN DESERT.

"You laugh, you think this fine trick, but I show you 'nother mighty juggle; took me ten years to learn this juggle . . ." and so on.

As the applause dies down the bell rings again and out comes the "Chinaman with the cast-iron head." All the time "the orchestra" plays Russian dances, plays them very noisily. He with the iron head lies down on the sand and puts two bricks on his temples. At a distance of ten yards another holds a brick and prepares to aim it at the head of his prostrate fellow-player. He aims it, but the iron-headed one pretends to lose his nerve and jumps up with a terrible scream, pointing to the music. The music must be calmed down. The audience holds its breath as the trick is repeated to gentle lullaby airs. This time the prostrate man receives the bricks one by one as they are aimed—square on the bricks lying on his temple—and, of course, is none the worse, though he takes the risk of a bad shot.

The old conjurer came out again and danced to the Russian Kamarinsky air, holding a bamboo as if it were his partner, and doing all manner of clever and amusing turns.

The young man who juggled the tea-tray on the chopstick reappeared and did a difficult balancing trick, raising himself on a trestle which rested on little spheres on a table. Then came two most original items, the dancing of an old man in a five-yard linen whip and the rolling round the body of a rusty eight-foot iron sceptre.

The man who danced made the whip crack and roll out over the arena in splendid circles and waves, and he was ever in the midst of it. The juggler of the sceptre contrived to roll the strange looking implement all over his body, about his back and his shoulders and his stomach, and never let it touch the ground and never touched it with his hand—and at the same time to dance to the music. This was a most attractive feat, and was as pleasant to watch as anything I had ever seen in a large city.

There was an interval and a great buzz of talking and surmise. After the interval came wrestling matches and trick-riding on bicycles—nothing original. A clever little Mongol had no difficulty in disposing of those who offered to wrestle with him, and a Russian cyclist who rode on his



KIRGHIZ PRAYING.

handlebars received great applause from the people of Kopal, most of whom had not seen a bicycle before.

So the entertainment ended, and everyone was well pleased. The juggling was a great mystification to the simple Russians, and I heard many amusing comments from those behind me and beside. The conjuring forth of the steaming samovar was especially troubling to the minds of the peasant women, and I heard one say to another:

"God knows where he got it from." And the other replied:

"What has God got to do with it?—it's the power o' Satan."

I returned to the post-house in a pleasant frame of mind, took out my sheets and blanket and slept in a wagon in the yard. I said Kopal had no barber, but next day I found a

Sart who shaved. Picture me sitting on a rag of carpet on the floor of a mud hut, a red handkerchief tied tightly round my neck. A bald-headed old Mahomedan holds in his hand a broken mug containing vinegar. He dips his thumb in it and then massages my cheeks and chin and neck. It was queer to feel his broad thumb pounding against my skin and chin bone. My hair is fairly torn off with an unhandy razor; no water is given me with which to rinse, but as the stooping Sart finishes his job, he puts into my hand three inches of broken mirror so that I can survey my new countenance and judge whether he has done well.

The Chinese at the post-house behaved like Christians, or, rather, as Christians should, with great humbleness and altruism, giving up the samovar to Russian visitors, fetching

water to fill the washing bowls, cleaning and drying the dishes after their breakfast, and sweeping the post-room floor before they went away. The postmaster's wife said there was a constant flow of Chinese, and they always behaved in that way.

Kopal, 4,000ft. above the sea level, is in the midst of fine scenery, and the frontier all the way to Chugachak and the shoulder of the Altai mountains is wild and desolate. The boundary is marked by numbered poles, but there are few soldiers or excisemen to question you if you cross either way. There is a certain amount of smuggling done, one of the chief articles brought through being Havana cigars, of which the local bureaucracy is very fond.

On the road the English officer may occasionally be seen travelling with Hindu servant and guns to Kuldja, Chinese Tartary—perchance to India. They are given facilities to

make such journeys and receive very honourable treatment, their names being forwarded to all the post-masters on the way, and instructions being posted in all the post-houses along the road. It was interesting to read on the post-house walls notices of the following type:

"There will pass this way (then would come an English name). You are to give

him horses and all of which he may stand in need. In the case of his being hindered for any reason you will be severely punished."

These English gentlemen usually possess their own tarantasses, and sleep in them at night. In that way they avoid the unpleasantness of sleeping in a room full of Chinese. I, for my part, slept almost every night in the open, either in a wagon or on a hillside.



LEPERS IN A FRONTIER TOWN.

TIMBER-GROWING IN WAR TIME.

JUST at this time, when the dreadful circumstances of war are preventing our obtaining the normal cargoes of timber from the Continent, it is only natural that particular attention should be directed towards the possibility of making provision for a larger native supply in the future by planting in suitable localities in our islands. Unfortunately, the proprietors of estates in which such localities are included have not usually had any education in forestry. It does not seem very generally known that the Board of Agriculture has taken a step which ought to be of much assistance to those estate owners who are in this condition of ignorance. They have appointed and are maintaining experts in various districts of Great Britain for the special purpose of giving advice, gratis, to all who are thus debating the possibilities of profitable planting. It needs only to write a line to the Board of Agriculture, asking the name and address of their advising expert for the district in which the applicant is interested, and arrangements can be made for the man of science to pay a visit to the scene of the proposed plantation without a penny cost to the owner of the estate.

That is an opportunity which should be known more widely, and, seeing how great is the diversity of districts and soils in respect to the proposition of planting them in timber trees considered from the commercial point of view, it is not likely that anyone, knowing these opportunities of expert advice to exist, will think it reasonable to neglect them. This very fact of the diversity of different localities in this regard makes figures taken from the results in one a very fallacious indication for similar operations in another. Hardly any two can be alike

in the initial cost. On the other hand, if the figures are thus variable, the facts are constant. Certain general laws can be stated as to what can and cannot be done: principles which are sound guides to any planting in Great Britain.

Perhaps the first thing to make clear is that the principal expense is neither in the young trees nor in the labour of getting them into the ground, but in the fencing. The fencing is absolutely essential, because young trees have so many enemies. There are rabbits and there are sheep, which you must exclude. That means that it is necessary to surround the plantation with wire netting, and it is no use trying to state a price for that, because it is a price which, in itself, is fluctuating (lately it has been consistently on the rise), and the cost, by the time you have it fixed in place, is chiefly determined by the ease or difficulty of carting it to its position, by the distance from a railway station, and so forth. Obviously the larger the area enclosed at any one place, the less netting, relatively, is needed for its fencing.

Even when you have excluded the rabbits and sheep you have by no means finished with the enemies of young trees. There are the squirrels, the mice and the insects. Where the foremost are many you have, however reluctantly, to kill them off. Mice are more difficult to deal with, though they are more troublesome while the trees are still nurselings than when they come to an age and size to be planted out. Encouragement of owls and kestrels may help you to keep their numbers down.

This point considered, further questions arise as to whether the game is worth the candle. Probably timber-tree planting on good soil can never be made to pay in England—to pay, that is, relatively

to other crops. Even in Germany, where forestry has long been studied scientifically, we are led to understand that, generally speaking, it pays only at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. That is not good enough for any land in Great Britain which is of much more than what we call "prairie value." There are certain trees, such as oak, which will not grow usefully in any but good soil, soil which could be turned to better account under other crops.

We have lost much of the value of oak, since the value of the bark, for tannin, has been lost, and the general opinion seems to be that this is a value which will not be recovered, in spite of certain—we hope very temporary—conditions which seem to point to its present increase. The conifers make the timber which appears to promise best for the moment. Larch is in demand for pit props; it can be used, creosoted, for railway sleepers. It is a fast grower during the first thirty years of its life, and by the time it has attained 8 in. in diameter of stem it is suitable for pit props. The common larch of this country (*Larix europæa*) appears to make better timber than the Japanese or any other of the recently introduced kinds. It is stated that the variety which has the reddish female flowers (it is of neonæcious habit) makes the toughest wood. It will grow in Britain at a height of 1,700 ft. It is not, however, at these high levels that it will come to a good height, or show quick returns, but the arid soils common on hillsides seem to suit it well. It is at its worst where its roots search down to water-logged strata, and in situations where that would occur it is of no use to attempt its planting.

The wind shelter makes a difference that is important as to the height at which any of the conifers—doubtless the best kind of timber for hill planting—will do well. Whatever the actual altitude of the plantation may be, this is a consideration of moment, for even at a low level the trees will be very stunted and many will be killed outright before making any useful growth on the bare scalp of an isolated hill, whereas several hundred of feet higher up they may do well if they have behind and around them higher land again to break the wind's force. Planting on a large scale becomes a very expensive business if anything in the nature of an artificial windscreen is attempted, and would almost certainly fail to repay its cost.

Once it has been determined that the planting, all circumstances considered, is worth while, there is no difficulty whatever about the actual operations. It is debated whether the larch

should be grown by itself or with other trees, which are thought to give it shelter and comparative immunity from insect pests, but probably its growth as a tall and straight timber tree is best when no other kinds are with it. And experience seems to prove that it seldom does well on land that has previously been occupied by conifers of another species, such as spruce or Scotch fir. A further important point to consider is the best age at which to plant out the young trees from the nursery. Two years is recommended as a generally good age to choose, but this again is a question that has to be determined by local circumstances. If circumstances favour, it is scarcely too much to say that it is impossible to plant out too young—the younger the better.

The check to the growth which all transplantation causes is sooner overcome the younger the trees are. But the question that the planter-out has to ask is: What is the liability of the trees to be overgrown and choked by other herbage if they are set out at too tender an age? Where your ground is fairly clear of heavy undergrowth you may plant them out a good deal younger than where the trees, before they have fairly established themselves, will be assailed by a rank growth of fern and bramble. And as a rule it is just in places where bracken, fern and the like do grow rather rankly that the planting is likely to be undertaken and is likely to be a commercial success. Strong two year old nurselings ought to be able to hold their own against undergrowth if other conditions favour them. Even under the best conditions it is generally necessary to clear out the undergrowth occasionally until the trees have attained a height of 6 ft. or more.

As said before, it is of no use attempting to grow larch where the roots will be in water. On the other hand, there is one kind of timber tree greatly in demand just now which will grow freely in a watery situation. That is the ash. Good ash timber commands a very high price and is likely to do so for a long while to come. Ash might be worth planting in some marshy places which could not be made to return a profit under any other crop, but though ash will grow quite readily in such places, it is like the alder in that it cannot be relied on to make a large tree where the roots are in boggy ground, so that the result must be rather speculative. The so-called marsh larch (*Larix americana*) has not been tried in England, but a species of spruce (the Sitka spruce) is recommended for swampy ground.

OUR GIPSY RECRUITS.

"YES," observed the village barber, who is, with the exception of the blacksmith's sons, about the only man left with us who is of age to enlist (and even as I write these words the news reaches me that these two blacksmiths are likewise going), and who is himself shaving wounded Belgians at the mansions of the great. "Yes, we knows 'em well, comes down here, they does, to get a shave and brush-up before they sees the major and the sergeant. Just the right sort o' men they be, too, these here Didakais. Brings themselves up hard as nails. Sleeps out rough in tents and such-like summer and winter alike. Walks miles and miles on end, and often has nothing to eat except nuts for days together. Lives hard and dies hard."

("Drink hard, swear hard and drive their horses hard," his hearer inwardly supplemented.)

It was immediately after the first scarcely credited rumours of the horrible atrocities committed by the German Army had most reluctantly been accepted by the British public at large as unmistakable and brutal facts, that I met on the road, coming home from his work in a gravel pit, a half gipsy well known to us by name and by nature; one of a family of six stalwart sons, half-and-halves from the gipsy colony on the hill above. All of them were tall, stalwart and of great muscular strength, some were of Grecian features, and all were as fit as a fiddle. This one had served his time in the Militia, and had put aside, somewhat surlily and shamefacedly it is true, any allusion to his serving again; also he had obviously avoided any talk with us when encountered on the road, and slinking silently by. But now he stopped short and looked one squarely in the face. "Miss, I've made up my mind to go!"

"Have you really? I say, that's splendid!"

"Yes, I 'ave, miss. I can't stand it no longer, hearen' about they poor children. It makes me cry, miss. *Miss, it fair makes my blood crawl.*"

A few words more passed between us. Then, "When are you off, Jack?"

"To-morrow mornen' at ten o'clock the Major's taking us off, miss. Jimma, he's a-going too. Both on us off together, we is. Give you a look in afore we goes, miss."

Next morning the darkest and most gipsy-faced of the five brothers strode suddenly into our camp, sloe black of eye, swarthy olive of complexion, soft of tongue and supple as a panther cub, yet the grasp of his fist was like iron as he shook hands again

and again in deadly earnest, determined to go to the front and "out they Germans."

"Are the others going, Jimma?"

"No, they isn't, miss! Can't put no heart into 'em! Dan, he'd rather pick blackberries all day."

"I'll go up and talk to them."

"That's right, miss, you go and hearten 'em up a bit!"

"Hark, what's that?" It was the voice of Jack behind the bramble hedge, exhorting his brother to "Come on, quick!"

"Write you a line, miss? Yes, I will! Where's that bit o' paper, miss?"

Wildly cramming a packet of cigarettes into one pocket and an addressed envelope into the other, Jimma, in violent haste, jumped the bramble hedge to join Jack in the lane. And the Major took them off.

A few mornings after this we were having breakfast outside the caravans when the third and tallest of the gipsy brethren hove in sight round the fir trees. I was just in the act of abstracting a tea-leaf from my cup, and shouting to my brother that "a great big stranger was coming," when the great big stranger marched straight in to us and shook hands with all the warmth and vigour that the two previous ones had displayed.

"Hulloa, Dan! That you?"

"That's me, miss," responded he, cheerfully (he presented an appearance between that of an Irishman, a tramp and a brigand), as he lowered his six-foot-two frame on to the ground, before being invited as a guest and a stranger to take a seat on the chopping block. "I'm a-thinkin' of goin' off too, miss."

"O, that's right, Dan! That's beautiful! Have some breakfast? What are you eating now?" ("Hulloa!" I call out to my brother. "Dan's enlisting!")

"Nuts, miss. See 'ere!" He pulled a handful out of his ragged coat pocket, with a laugh, and after we had finished breakfast and he had lit his pipe, he came over and emptied his pockets of nuts into my apron, at the same time bringing me the wood block and the chopper wherewith to crack them.

"What do you generally have to eat, Dan?"

"Whatever I can get, miss. Sometimes nothin' at all." He then went on to talk about his baby son. Now, Dan's marriage tie was of "the uncertificated, roving sort, everything savouring of which," like Mrs. Tauno Chikno in the "Romany Rye," "I am determined never to sanctify."

Sooner or later he had to be tackled on the subject; but it was a task I did not relish, so it had best be got over as quickly as possible.

"Just get right away, will you?" I implored my brother, "while I speak to him about it. *Right* away, see?" And he obediently, albeit reluctantly, betook himself off to the well with the water-cans.

"I suppose you aren't really married, Dan?" I began, cautiously.

"No, miss, I never was," replied he, lightly.

"Well, don't you think you'd *better* be, before you go off? Then you can leave your wife and child with a free mind."

"That's it, miss," agreed he, encouragingly.

"Not in *church*," I added, hastily; "she and you can't have a church marriage. The Rashai (priest) wouldn't allow it. But you can be legally married in a registry office. Just take your brother-in-law's cart and drive in to the gav (town) and see the recruiting-sergeant (you wouldn't believe how nice and kind he is) and get married, all on the same day."

"That's it, miss," said Dan again, as he got up to take his leave—rather hastily, I thought. "I'll speak to she about it, but I don't know whether she will."

About two mornings after, he reappeared suddenly at

"Pick blackberries, I 'lows, miss," replied the hopeful one, joyously.

"Well, Kushti bokh (good luck), Dan, and good-bye!"

"After all," I said to Dan's sister, whom I found sitting dejectedly over a fire, watching a large black pot boiling, when next I went up the hill, "perhaps it's just as well. If she was anyone's wife, it wouldn't be Dan's, would it? It would be the first one she had, or someone else or——"

"Very likely it would, miss," answered she, very shortly and sharply.

Hereupon I fell into thought, which kept us both silent for a space—austerely and severely so on her part, abstractedly and dazedly on mine. My reflections ran thus: If Dan had accepted my offer to see them both married in a registry office, where did the morality of such a marriage tie come in? It came in nowhere; it was merely a question of expediency. On the other hand, was not Dan well quit of getting bound down to this fallen and depraved creature? In justice to the gipsy race I must here remark that such depravity as hers is not common to gipsies as a whole, and that even the gipsy lovers, who disdain a church or a civil marriage, who "take each other's word" and "jump the broomstick" together, consider it every bit as binding a ceremony as yours, my fine madam, who have



WHEN THE MEN HAVE GONE.

the steps of our living-caravan. "I'm off to-morrow mornen', miss," he announced, triumphantly.

"What? You are? O, I am glad! Did you get married, Dan?"

"No, I didn't, miss, and it's too late now!"—still more triumphantly.

"Well, but—how's she going to get supported while you're gone?"

"Ave to support 'erself as best she can, miss," said Dan, carelessly. "I'll send 'er some o' mine when I gets it," he added, his eyes on the ground, as he lit the cigarette my brother handed down to him.

"I ain't got no wongar (money) about me, miss. I been putcherin' (asking) the Major for some, but he says he's a poor man!"

"Here, del Dan a tringarushi (shilling)," I called up to my brother, in the living-van. As I had been up to the gipsy colony on the hill and promised to pay for the registry office marriage certificate, under the wholly erroneous impression that it would cost only a posh-crownus, it was but fair that Dan should have a bit of loovu (money) before he left us for good and all.

"And what are you going to do next, Dan?" we enquired, as I pinned the yellow button with a red "R" on it into the front of his ragged and grimy cap—the badge I present to all Romany recruits on or after their enlistment.

a grand, gorgeous wedding; they mate for life, like the peregrine falcons of the Isle of Wight cliffs, and remain faithful and true to each other to the end.

And now the Black Sheep of the gipsy colony on the hill has gone, and is said to be "a-gettin' on fine, and a-ridin' of the leader" in the R.F.A. out at the front, and forgotten and forgiven for ever are the days when he was supposed to set afire to the furze on forest commons when "the wind was up" (i.e., in the East), which, combined with his swarthinness of countenance and general blackness of character, had presumably earned him his nickname of "Rookey" (Rûkis—trees).

A knock at the caravan door. Who is there? A khaki-clad figure is holding out its hand to me. Another black sheep, the blackest of the tent-dwellers who travel the forest, and has not so very long ago been forbidden the camp. At least, my brother looked him straight in the face for some time without speaking a word until he took himself off. This one asks for a match, and I hand him the box out of my candlestick.

"Has you left *yourself* any?" he whines in his gipsy voice, with brotherly consideration. He lights his pipe and tells me all the story of his illness and subsequent enlistment and his determination to "ketch the Kayser."

"Ah, I believe you Romanies are the ones to do that," I encourage him. "Got your ears and eyes more open, you outdoor dwellers, than any of those Gorgios. You Romany chals could catch him if anyone could!" A. E. GILLINGTON.

WAR AND WIRE.

AN APPEAL TO FARMERS.

HUNTING is "carrying on" in most districts with a sadly shrunken following. It is needless to enlarge on the importance of its doing so, as reasons for this have been pointed out many times lately. Former supporters have been urged to continue their support to the utmost of their means. What this may amount to no one can say, any more than they can forecast what may be the result of this war upon the life and finances of us all. An obvious and serious result of the straitened finances is brought home to anyone going out at present, in the presence in many countries of more wire than usual. That this should be is only natural, owing partly to economic reasons, partly to the fact that many of those who in normal seasons attend to its removal

an appeal to those concerned comes better before than after the mischief is done.

There are plenty of people in every hunting field who are in no kind of danger from wire, wherever it may be placed, for the good reason that before they jump a fence its freedom from wire will always have been amply demonstrated by the many who have preceded them over the obstacle. To these the question is of minor importance. Let the erectors of wire, however, consider who is affected by their action, and they will realise that it is the very men to whom they would be the last to wish harm who are in the greatest danger. First of all come the hunt servants, probably first the huntsman, who is in duty bound to try to be with his hounds; he is very often most popular with the farmers, if not their



IN THE FRONT RANK ARE USUALLY SOME SOLDIERS.

are serving their country, and partly to the fact that farmers who would usually remove it voluntarily are carrying on their exceedingly important business very shorthanded. Such cannot be blamed when their all too scarce labour is fully employed in other even more vital ways. It may not be out of place, however, to make an appeal to the farmers, to whom all hunting men gladly acknowledge so much indebtedness, to do what they can to prevent the increase of wire during this time. Everyone knows how in any country where hunting is discontinued for a time wire springs up, and how difficult it is ever to get back the old happy condition of things which obtained before. At present, and probably in the near future to a greater extent, hunting is and will be much curtailed, and though not quite discontinued in many places, it may be so in others; therefore

personal friend. Then, in the front rank are usually some soldiers; no appeal regarding them will fall upon deaf ears at the present time, surely. How many of them, in writing from the front, have referred to the sport they love, and expressed the wish that they may find it going strong when they return, as we hope devoutly they will. One feels that nothing can be too good for those who are fighting for us, and when the war is over I venture to say that all will feel this sentiment deeply. Let everyone, therefore, do what he can now, and till that wished-for time comes, to keep their home at least as they left it, and leave barbed wire for its fit use—to protect war trenches and trip up enemies, not friends, nor the gallant lads who are fighting and dying for our homes and country, the home of the finest sport on earth.



'WARE WIRE !

The debt the country owes to hunting is acknowledged by all, from the War Office downwards, as a nucleus of horse supply, as well as a training ground for our brilliant cavalry soldiers. The actual damage done is usually willingly paid for from hunt funds in ordinary times. It is now, and will be more so in future, a great means of keeping up the price of such things as hay, which means a great deal to the farmer in a grass country, where the greatest amount of hunting is carried on. Hunting has been for centuries the sport most preferred by the farmer himself and his sons when times are good enough to allow of their joining the "glad throng." In the hunting field the farmer who breeds a good horse finds his best market. Apart from heavy horses, many farmers breed a "nag" or two, and if they realised it could as easily breed one suitable for this purpose as one of much lower class, and while getting their own sport, might often find it very profitable as well as enjoyable.

After the war is over there is little doubt that those in authority will make great efforts to help to reinstate horse breeding in this country. They are already beginning to return from France mares suitable for brood purposes, and I have no doubt this will be done on a large scale later. No one

can rear horses so cheaply as a farmer, and no one has the same chances to make them quiet and handy in their young days.

Neither the demand in peace time nor the price paid for remounts is tempting to the breeder, but with the hunting field as an opening for the best, and the remount demand to fall back upon in the case of the "misfits," horse breeding, intelligently pursued, is worthy of the consideration of every farmer in a grass country so long as hunting continues, and, conversely, hunting must continue, to preserve

this market, as well as to continue the tradition amply demonstrated abroad at present, that our country, through the medium of the hunting field, produces the finest horsemen and cavalry in the world. This matter is largely in the hands of farmers at the present unprecedented time. They, to a very great extent, are tied to the land, and though many are serving in Yeomanry and elsewhere there are many who cannot do so; these may serve their country in this minor way, as well as in the more evident one of helping to provide the food supply. To those, therefore, would we make the most earnest appeal. Hunting, usually regarded only as a pastime, has proved its usefulness and justified its existence to every thinking man. G.



LEARNING HIS BUSINESS.



HEALE HOUSE will be remembered as long as that amazing adventure, the escape of Charles II after the Battle of Worcester, for the King harboured there from October 6th until October 13th, 1651. The full story is well told in *The Royal Miracle*, by Mr. A. M. Broadley, who traces the King's forty-two days' wanderings from Worcester northwards to Boscobel, south to Charmouth, north-east to Heale and south-east to Brighton, and so by ship to Normandy and safety. In one detail, however, he goes wrong. "That night (October 6th) he arrived safely at Heale House on Salisbury Plain, not far from Stonehenge and close to the banks of the Avon. The seventeenth century house *has now entirely disappeared*, although an effort has been made

to preserve the 'closet' associated by tradition with Charles's presence at Heale." It is true that the house has been diminished in size and greatly altered, but the south wing remains intact, the small bay alone being modern. The original position of the closet in which the King was bestowed must be purely conjectural, and there is no little upper room which looks especially suitable as a hiding-place. The King's courage and careless disregard of dangers during this long flight were amazing, but this restful sojourn at Heale must have been welcome. Heale offered many advantages to a driven man. It stood then far from a highway and free of neighbours, but was only three miles from Salisbury. There are two stories of his visit. One we have from the Earl of Clarendon, who was first cousin of the owner of Heale, and

followed Charles to France immediately after the escape from Brighton. He doubtless had it from the King's lips. The other was dictated by the King himself at Newmarket to no less a person than Pepys in 1680. We may imagine the "great content" with which the diarist must have used his shorthand in taking down the long narrative of the six weeks' journey. Here is the part of it which concerns Heale: "After having remained some time in concealment at a house of Frank Wyndham's, I went away to a widow gentlewoman's house, one Mrs. Hyde, some four or five miles from Salisbury, where I came into the house just as it was almost dark, with Robin Philips only, not intending at first to make myself known. But just as I alighted at the door, Mrs. Hyde knew me, though she had never seen me but once in her life, and that was with the King, my father, in the army, when we marched by Salisbury some years before in the time of the war; but she being a discreet woman, took no notice at that time of me, I passing only for a friend of Robin Philips, by whose advice I went thither. At supper there was with us Frederick Hyde, since a Judge, and his sister-in-law, a widow, Robin Philips, myself, and Dr. Henchman, since Bishop of London, whom I had appointed to meet me there. While we were at supper, I observed Mrs. Hyde and her brother Frederick to look a little earnestly at me, which led me to believe they might



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FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The wing facing the camera is old; on the right is the new drawing-room seen in sharp perspective.



SOUTH-WEST FRONT. (From the doorway to the right is old; to the left is new.)

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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DOORWAY ON SOUTH-EAST SIDE. (Old)



MIDDLE OF NEW NORTH ENTRANCE FRONT.

know me. But I was not at all startled at it, it having been my purpose to let her know who I was; and accordingly after supper Mrs. Hyde came to me, and I discovered myself to her, who told me she had a very safe place to hide me in, till we knew whether our ship was ready or no. But she said it was not safe for her to trust any person but herself and her sister; and therefore advised me to take my horse next morning, and make as if I quitted the house, and return again about night; for she would order it so that all her servants and everybody should be out of the house but



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FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

herself and her sister, whose name I remember not. So Robin Phillips and I took our horses, and went as far as Stonehenge, and there we staid looking upon the stones for some time, and returned back again to Heale (where Mrs. Hyde lived) about the hour she appointed, where I went up into the hiding hole, that was very convenient and safe, and I staid there all alone (Robin Phillips then going away to Salisbury) some four or five days."

This statement may be supplemented a little. It was characteristic of the King's pluck that he should play

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the tourist at such a time of danger and go a-gazing at the wonders of Stonehenge. We are told that his arithmetic gave the lie to the old fable that no one could count the stones rightly twice running. Heale then belonged to Robert Hyde, a serjeant-at-law who had lost the Recordership of Salisbury through serving with the King at Oxford, and was then, like his master, living in retirement. He was the second son of Sir Lawrence Hyde, Attorney-General to Anne, James I's Queen, and had inherited Heale from his elder brother, Lawrence, whose widow was still living. There a portrait of the doughty old lady is preserved in Lord Clarendon's collection. She bore the charming name of Amphilis, and was a daughter of Sir Richard Tichborne of Winchester. After the Restoration Robert Hyde was knighted, became Chief Justice in the King's Bench, and died while hearing a case in 1665. The Frederick Hyde who was also of the party was a younger brother of Robert, and, like him, a serjeant-at-law. Robin Philips was Robert Phelps, a son of Sir Robert Phelps of Montacute: he survived the adventure to sit as Member of Parliament for Stockbridge in the Restoration Parliament, and died in his ninetieth year. Frank Wyndham, where the King lay hid before he went to Heale, was Robert Hyde's brother-in-law.

The character of the south wing of Heale makes it likely that it was designed about 1640 by someone of the school of Inigo Jones. It is, however, possible that it was built after the Restoration. In that case the King stayed in an earlier house, built, perhaps, by the Erringtons, who owned the Heale property from early in the sixteenth century until Sir Lawrence Hyde acquired it towards the end of Elizabeth's reign. After Sir Robert Hyde died childless in 1665 the place passed in turn to his brother Alexander, Bishop of Salisbury, the latter's son Robert, another Robert Hyde, a nephew, and Mary, his sister. She bequeathed it not to anyone of Hyde blood, as the elaborate arrangements of old Sir Robert's will had intended, but to her daughter's husband, Dr. Frampton. From him it passed to kinsmen of the Bowles family and then to Sir Edmund Loder, from



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HALL AND LOWER STAIRS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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UPPER PART OF STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

whom it was purchased by Mr. Louis Greville in 1894.

He soon set about renewing the ancient amenities of Heale, with the aid of Mr. Detmar Blow. The accompanying plan differentiates the old part of the house from the new. The stone mullions and iron casements of the windows had been replaced by wooden sliding sashes, but the ends of the transoms remained and the older type of window was renewed. The only change here made was to clear away a late building which abutted against the east side and to add a bay window. Exploration of the surrounding ground revealed the foundations of a larger block, with a frontage of about eighty feet, which stretched some thirty feet to the north of the existing building. There were indications that this main wing had been burnt down, and there is a legend of a fire in 1835, but no precise information. In the middle of its chief front there had been apparently a big octagonal bay. Mr. Greville has made



Copyright. OLD FIREPLACE AT EAST END OF HALL. "C.L."

vigorous search for an old view of the house before its reduction in size, but so far without success. Probably one exists somewhere, buried in a scrap book in some private library, for Heale must have had its loyal pilgrims after the Restoration, and the antiquary was already abroad in the land. If such a picture should turn up, Mr. Greville will be glad to know of it. There was little by way of definite guidance, and although the plan of the new work followed the old foundations to some extent, it was developed reasonably to suit modern needs.

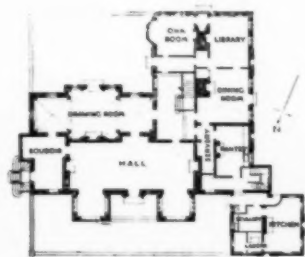
On the south-west side the old house stopped at what is now the garden entrance, and Mr. Blow doubled this front and so achieved a more dignified effect without prejudicing the charm of the original work. The niches in the two pedimented projections are especially charming. The north side is wholly new. A great overshadowing cedar makes a satisfactory picture of the whole impossible, but our detail of the main entrance shows that Mr. Blow went, at Mr. Greville's



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WEST END OF HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



PLAN.

desire, to Raynham Hall for inspiration. The old garden door on the south-east side of the original block is an enchanting piece of tall and delicate proportion.

Within the house not much original turfbishing remained, except some paneling and one fireplace which were refixed in the new hall. The staircase is an old one, but came from elsewhere. Otherwise the work is new, but based on various well known models in which Mr. Greville took special interest.

The planning of the formal parts of the garden was done by Mr. Peto. An undated plan of the estate, probably of early in the eighteenth century, shows stables to the north-west of the house and a walled garden north of the stables. This has survived as the present kitchen garden. No less interesting is the Japanese garden. Mr. Louis Greville spent some time in our Diplomatic Service at Tokio, and there learnt the charm which can be given to running water. He worked out the scheme of ponds, rills and rocks from his remembrance of Japan, fortified by a plan prepared by a Japanese gardener. The tea house and red bridge (copied from the Nikko Bridge) were not only made in Japan, but put up by two Japanese carpenters. Beneath the tea house two streams run at different levels, one above the other, the outcome of dams ingeniously disposed at intervals. The importation of exotic motives into garden design in England is dangerous, not only because they are rarely understood, but because there are few sites where they can take their place at all naturally. The disposition of a few typical ornaments, of a bronze stork here and a stone lantern there, does not make a Japanese garden; it only makes an English garden speak with a Japanese accent. At Heale House, however, the scheme is coherent and expressive of its owner's special knowledge and taste. It is, moreover, separated from the house by a garden scheme typically English, and does not, therefore, strike a jarring note in relation to the English character of the house itself.

LAWRENCE WEAVER.



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THE NIKKO BRIDGE.

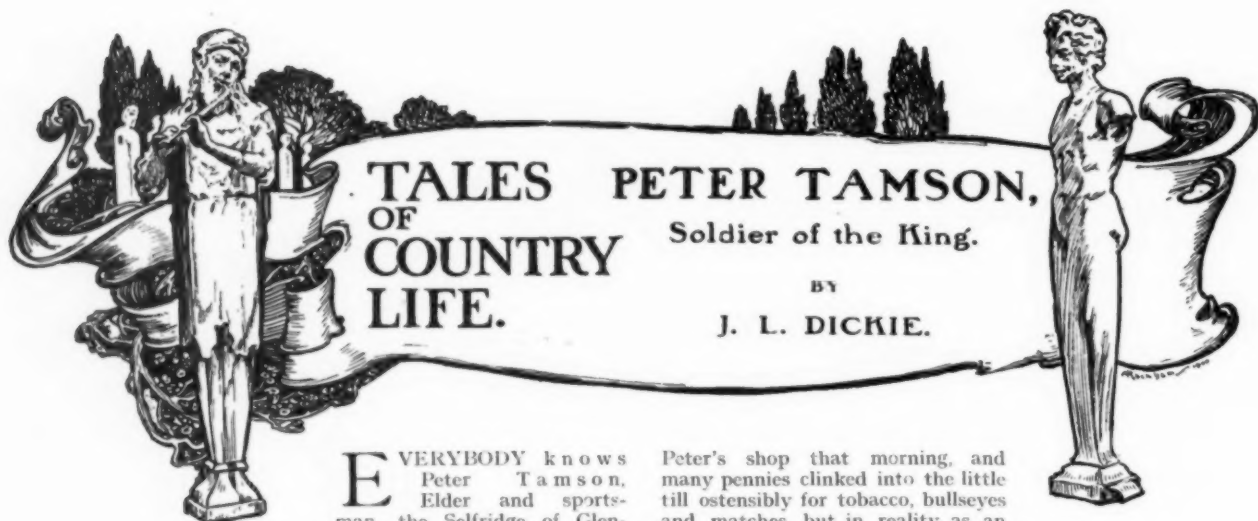
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THROUGH THE TEA HOUSE WINDOW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



EVERYBODY knows Peter Tamson, Elder and sportsman, the Selfridge of Glenquaich. At the outbreak of

the European war Peter was fifty-five, but owing to the hardy life he had led in the open air of a Scotch glen he did not look a day over forty, save for a few grey hairs mingling with the shock of red hair which adorned his splendid head.

It was Sunday evening in Glenquaich, and the Rev. John McGollach delivered a rousing sermon on the horrid atrocities of the world's enemy. His stentorian voice thrilled the kilted audience to their very marrow. "I ask every man of you to think of the innocent blood of women and children—and they might have been *your* women and children—spilt in wanton barbarity by a nation lost to every decency of humanity; and having thought, I ask every man of you here present who can bear arms to join the King's Army and to avenge with all the heat of your Highland blood those horrible crimes."

One could see the face of each man harden as the words were shouted, for the Rev. John felt in every fibre the acutest pain and indignation.

Peter and his wife Janet walked through the old grey churchyard to their cottage. One man, who had addressed a remark to Peter in passing but got no reply whispered to his companion: "Peter's birse is up. He'll dae something yet, auld tho' he is; mark my words."

Peter strode silent by the side of Janet, and as he entered the cottage banged the door, a most unusual thing for him to do. He sat down and leaned his furrowed face upon his hands. He ate no supper, much to Janet's distress, but groaned repeatedly, and his eyes seemed strangely wild. After Janet had finished eating he said he was going to the muckle hoose to see Lord Peat, the owner of Glenquaich.

He was ushered into the smoking-room, where Lord Peat happened to be alone reading.

"Hullo, Peter, what can I do for you?"

"I wis jeest wondering if ye'd let the fishin' for the spring, my lord."

"No, Peter, I haven't so far, and with this horrible war still going on I fancy it won't let."

"Aye, it is a horrible war, a hellish war, but there's jeest ae end till't."

"You mean?"

"A mean that Almichty God will no permit ony end but one, and that is the blotting oot o' a race siclike they are; but it's no' a pleasant thing to talk o', yer lordship. That was a terrible amusin' play the hoose pairty gave last week for the Refugees' Fund, but it beats me hoo for a while I didna ken the ladies and gentlemen that took pairt; noo Mr. Stirk is seventy if he's a day, and he lookit twenty-five."

"Oh, that's easily explained, Peter. Clarkson, the wig-maker from London, came down and made them up; it's quite simple."

"Made up." Peter pondered the words, and then gave a hoarse laugh. "Well, well, my lord, I'll just be going home."

"Good-night, Peter."

"Good-night, my lord."

Lord Peat thought Peter very odd in his demeanour, but knowing he was rather eccentric soon forgot the episode.

Janet had left his supper on the table, and was delighted to find Peter eat with zest. His simple meal over, he lit his pipe and said: "Noo, Janet, pay heed to me. I'm goin' tae London the morn, and I may no be back for a lang time. I feel in my bones I'll come back; but when, the good Lord alone kens."

Janet started up. "I micht hae kent—I see it aal noo. Yer gaun tae the war. Yer ower auld, Peter, but I'll no say ye nae if it's yer wull, and I'll keep the shoppie goin' till ye return, ma brave man. Ae, Peter, if a could but come wi' ye."

"Janet, yer a sensible woman; pit war oot o' yer heid till ye get a telegram frae me, and keep a ticht tongue in yer heid, lass."

Next morning it was all over Glenquaich that the Elder had gone to London by the first train. Many were the visitors to

Soldier of the King.

BY
J. L. DICKIE.

Peter's shop that morning, and many pennies clinked into the little till ostensibly for tobacco, bullseyes and matches, but in reality as an excuse to pump Janet as to the reason of this sudden departure. Janet's invariable reply was, "The Elder's gaun tae London, but what for is neither your business nor mine."

Peter, on arriving in London, took a sober four-wheeler to an ancient hostelry kept by the son of an old Glenquaich worthy. He had a good breakfast and then asked the host to look up the name of one Clarkson, wigmaker, and on getting his address took another four-wheeler to the great wigmaker's address. Peter did not take the cab because he wished to spend money, but simply because of his ignorance of London, and thought it cheaper to do this than waste half the morning getting to his destination. Arrived at Clarkson's, he asked to see the artist in wigs, and was told it was quite impossible. "Ma birkie," he said, in an angry voice to the dapper assistant who barred the way, "I'll see Maister Clarkson if a wait a week."

Finding Peter obdurate, and quite oblivious of other claims on his master's time, the "birkie" showed him in.

"Good morning, sir," said Peter.

"Good morning, Mr. —"

"Peter Tamson o' Glenquaich, at yer service, sir."

"Well, Mr. Tamson of Glenquaich, what can I do for you?"

"Well, ye see, sir, I'm gaun tae the front, an' I'm some auld tae enlist unless ye can snod me up a bit. I'm fifty-five, an' when I leave you I *maun* be thirty-five."

Mr. Clarkson lay back in his chair and shook with laughter. "How did you think of coming to me to rejuvenate you?"

"Well, Lord Peat had a bit play actin' at the muckle hoose in Glenquaich a while back, and auld Mr. Stirk o' Drumsnochter took pairt in't; he's every day o' seventy years, and ye made him twenty-five, an' I thoct if ye'd dae the same by me I'd stand a chance o' a Veterans' Corps onyway."

In half an hour Peter Tamson left Clarkson's looking a young thirty-five. Another four-wheeler took him to the nearest recruiting office, and in less time than it takes to write he was a soldier of the King.

The Recruiting Officer remarked to his junior as Peter left, "I believe that old Highlander is much beyond the age; he'd a curious young-old look about him, but I should say he'd be a devil to fight, and that's the sort we want, eh?"

Weeks ran into months, and still Peter was absent.

One day Tinny McTavish rushed round the village waving a copy of the *Times*, which Lord Peat had given him that morning. It recorded the fact that Sergeant Peter Tamson had been "awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous gallantry in the field," and proceeded to relate how the brave Peter had carried a boyish subaltern who was badly wounded off the field under heavy fire, and himself fell, shot through the ankle, as they were met by a party of Red Cross stretcher-bearers, who took both safely to the motor ambulance in waiting.

Janet cried her heart out, and then proceeded to pack her belongings. She shut the shop, which for a hundred years had never been shut on any day but a Wednesday afternoon or a Sunday, and went to London to see her man, who lay in a trim bed in a dainty ward of the London Hospital.

Peter was overcome when one bright day the Royal visitor came to his bedside and pinned the little cross with "For Valour" on it to the blue jacket of his hospital suit, and made kindly enquiry about his wounds.

"They got me wi' a bit shrapnel i' the leg, and noo the surgeon says I maun hae my leg ta'en aff below the knee; an' there's jeest ae thing I would beg, Sir, an' that is, if the Government gie me a timmer leg, it will be ane that's swack at the quheet."

This, being interpreted to the Royal visitor, meant that he wanted one with a movable foot and ankle-joint.

Two months later Glenquich was gay with bunting, and the band from Ballater was in attendance at the station. Lord Peat himself helped Peter out of the train into his own car, and the band struck up the strains of "See the Conquering Hero Comes." A banquet followed at the Glenquich Arms, and Peter, proud as Lucifer, wearing his cross, sat next Janet, who was resplendent in a new gown and shawl, the gifts of a

Gracious Lady who does not forget those whose men serve their King and country.

Tinny asked Peter, "Hoo mony o' the enemy did ye sheet?" "Whisht, Tinny; it's no' a thing to boast o', but a think a had a good baker's dozen onyway, lad."

Believe me, when Peter and Janet got home to their cottage there was not a dry eye in Glenquich, and the worthy pair squeezed hands like any yokel lovers of sixteen. It was a grand epoch in the history of Glenquich.

IN THE GARDEN.

SOME WINTER EFFECTS IN A SUSSEX GARDEN.

DURING winter there are some who almost ignore the existence of the garden, or treat it merely as a part of the bare forbidding landscape. They do not realise that winter has a charm of its own, and that by the exercise of skill this may be developed and beautified. It is true that one may usually find isolated plants, such as the azure blue *Iris stylosa* or the yellow-flowered Winter Jasmine, that bravely defy the

Oaks and Elms, and carpeted with an undergrowth of evergreen shrubs, an even more beautiful and vivid picture is created by masses of yellow and red stemmed Willows, *Salix vitellina* and *S. v. britzensis*. Colonies many yards in diameter scatter themselves on the rise of the banks, and during the whole winter form garden pictures such as few would consider possible. The naturally damp soil is ideal for these hardy Willows, which need little cultural attention beyond hard pruning once a year, *i.e.*, at the end of March. This is very important, because it is only on the young, one year old growths that the brilliant colour is fully developed. It is therefore necessary to cut away these growths every year, at the time named, right close to the old stem, so that during the following summer new shoots will be produced to give the colour effect during the winter. This and the massing together of large numbers of plants, with a background of dark evergreen shrubs or trees, constitute the secret of the beautiful effects to be found at Buckhurst. The illustrations, of the Dogwood and Willows respectively, will give some idea of the grouping and surroundings; and one has only to remember that the dark stemmed masses are in actual life glowing red to gain some idea of the effects obtained.

Although these Willows and Dogwood are the most conspicuous winter features, there are several other charming pictures to be found in these gardens. Witness the little dwarf hedge of Lavender that borders the lawn on the lower terrace and forms a dividing line between it and the grassy, Gorse-clad slope beyond. The silvery grey foliage of the Lavender is brought strongly into relief by the sombre green of the Gorse, and indicates to the observant how valuable it is for the outdoor garden at this season. At the south end of the lawn, and on the north side of a noble stone wall, one finds quite a hedge of that beautiful North American berried shrub, *Pernettya mucronata*. This is a most interesting plant in winter, its large, clustering bunches of fruits, varying in colour from deep rose to almost pure white, providing valuable material for cutting, in addition to lending a



RED DOGWOOD BY THE LAKESIDE.

elements and open their blossoms to the rigorous weather; but any attempt to create beautiful effects in the garden one generally looks for in vain. The uninitiated will at once say, "What! beautiful garden pictures in midwinter; impossible. What plants could be successfully utilised for the purpose in a climate such as we have to contend with?" These sceptics should see the gardens and pleasure grounds at Buckhurst Park, East Sussex, as the writer saw them on a dull, gloomy day at the end of January, when intermittent sheets of sleet were being hurled across the earth by winter winds, to realise the possibilities of the outdoor garden in winter.

The outstanding features were undoubtedly the red Dogwoods and yellow and red stemmed Willows, massed so as to create wonderful patches of colour in the distance. The visitor, standing on the terrace immediately in front of the house, sees far away, through a natural opening in the trees, a vivid mass of cardinal red. This is a large bed of Dogwood, *Cornus alba sanguinea*, skilfully planted by the lakeside, so that sombre evergreen Rhododendrons form an effective foil that emphasises the colour to perfection. This Dogwood is a compact shrub, the growths of which are shortened back each year in March to keep it about 4ft. in height and at the same time to induce the formation of the young shoots, the bark of which is coloured brilliant red. Thickly planted in quantity, the effect during winter is very beautiful.

At the north end of the lake, in a grass-clad valley with gently sloping banks, rather sparsely studded with stately



A DWARF HEDGE OF LAVENDER IN FRONT OF GORSE.

quiet tint of colour to the garden itself. Near by, scrambling over one of the stone pillars of a noble pergola, we find the Winter Honeysuckle (*Lonicera fragrantissima*), which probably the unobservant would scarcely notice is in flower. Yet its true Honeysuckle fragrance is unmistakable, and more than compensates for the dull, creamy white colour of the twin blossoms.

Not a stone's throw away, on a buttress of the lowest retaining wall, is the wonderful plant of Jerusalem Sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*) that was illustrated in our issue of February 13th. This is nearly 6ft. high and almost as broad, the beautiful white stems and grey foliage reflecting every ray of the too sparse winter light. Other beautiful winter shrubs on the buttresses of this wall are the Winter Jasmine, too well known to need description, and *Elæagnus pungens aurea* a hardy evergreen that deserves to be much better known. The leaves are glossy green, each almost perfectly margined with golden yellow, and provide a warm tint of colour that might be very effectively used in winter.

Walking along the lower terrace pathway, one comes to a flight of bold, semicircular steps designed by Mr. Lutyens, and just in the angle of these and the stone wall is one of the best specimens of *Cotoneaster angustifolia* that it has been my lot to see. I do not mean that it is the largest, but the best berried plant, the orange red fruits hanging in wonderful festoons from nearly every shoot. The cramped position the roots occupy suggests that such a condition is conducive to berry production, and the hint is recorded here for the benefit of those—and they are many—who have hitherto failed to induce this comparatively new shrub to give its beautiful berries in quantity. But a few yards away a group of the most beautiful of all golden-leaved evergreens, *Cupressus macrocarpa lutea*, forms an effective screen against wind and sight to the semicircular stone seat that has been cleverly designed to form, as it were, an integral part of the steps.

From these features a broad gravel pathway leads down towards the lake, passing on its way a magnificent specimen of Waterer's Holly (*Ilex watereriana*), the glossy green leaves, margined with gold, rendering it a most effective shrub in the winter landscape. At the bottom of the pathway, and close to the lake, one finds Silver Birches grouped in natural clusters, their silver stems glistening in the winter light being rendered doubly interesting by the carpet of winter-flowering Heather that spreads itself over the earth below. Such, then, are some of the more important winter features at Buckhurst, pictures that might with advantage be adopted in other gardens and pleasure grounds.

F. W. H.

THE BEST HALF HARDY ANNUALS FOR SPRING SOWING.

FOR garden purposes seedsmen have arranged flowers of annual duration—i.e., those that are raised from seed, flower and die in one year—into two well defined classes, viz., hardy and half hardy. This rough and ready division has its merits, inasmuch as it may be taken to indicate that those classed as "hardy" can be successfully and, in most instances, better sown in the open garden, usually where the plants are to flower; while those designated as "half hardy" are best sown under glass and the seedlings subsequently transplanted to the open border or beds. This latter is not, however, a hard and fast rule; a good many of the half hardy kinds can, especially in very warm gardens, be sown outdoors, but treated in this way they generally commence to flower too late in the season to give the best results. The classification into hardy and half hardy must not be taken as an indication of the plants' capabilities to withstand cold, as the so-called *Nasturtium*, one of the most tender of all plants, is included with the hardy kinds.

Sowing the Seed.—As half hardy annuals are best sown under glass, a start is usually made with them towards the

end of February or early in March. A great amount of artificial heat is by no means necessary for raising the seedlings. Indeed, one has no hesitation in saying that more plants are ruined by excessive temperatures than by any other cause. A cold frame, or one only slightly heated, is preferable, because short jointed sturdy plants are then almost assured. Nor are very elaborate mixtures of soil required. Good, sweet, decayed turfy loam, two parts; coarse sand and leaf soil, or thoroughly decayed and sweet manure, half a part each, will make an excellent mixture for all those named below, and the same kind of soil will answer admirably in which to subsequently transplant the seedlings. It should all be passed through a half inch meshed sieve, the coarse portions being retained to place over the drainage in the bottoms of the boxes, pans or pots. Moderately firm soil, with a level surface, is desirable; and the smaller the seeds, the less covering will they require. Thus, Aster and Stock seeds, which are comparatively large, may be covered with nearly a quarter of an inch of fine soil, while *Petunia*, which resembles fine dust, will need no more covering than a sprinkling of silver sand. Thin and even sowing is desirable, and it is good gardening to cover each box or pan with a sheet of glass until germination has been effected. This preserves an even state of moisture over the surface of the soil, and is especially beneficial in the case of very minute seeds that lie practically uncovered.

Treatment of Seedlings.—It is in the treatment of these that so many failures occur. Overcrowding, too much moisture and too little ventilation are the greatest evils. The first named is eliminated to a great extent by thin sowing and transplanting the seedlings immediately they can be conveniently handled. This is termed by gardeners "pricking off," and consists in

reality of carefully lifting the seedlings from the seed box and transplanting them 2 in., 3 in. or 4 in. apart, according to their habit, in other boxes which they will occupy until planted outdoors, except in a very few instances, where they are later transferred to pots. Boxes or earthen pans at least three inches deep ought to be used for the seedlings. Asters and Stocks suffer badly from a fungus that attacks the



RED STEMMED WILLOWS GROUPED ON A GENTLY SLOPING BANK.

young plants just above the soil and causes decay there. It is due generally to over-watering and insufficient ventilation, defects that must be guarded against. Except for a few days after pricking off, when the frame should be kept closed and shaded, full ventilation is desirable. It is also necessary to keep the seedlings close to the glass, this and free access of air inducing sturdy plants. The following are the best half hardy annuals for general purposes:

Asters.—The so-called Chinese Asters (*Callistephus*) have been very much improved in recent years, and can now be obtained in a number of beautiful colours. The single varieties and those known as the Comet and Ostrich Plume types are the best for general purposes. Pale salmon pink and rich salmon rose are two distinct shades that must not be omitted.

Canary Creeper.—This is a yellow-flowered climbing plant that is useful for forming a temporary screen. Although it can be sown in the open, it is best raised under glass.

Annual Carnations.—These must not be confused with the perennial Carnations of our gardens. Seed sown under glass at the end of February will produce plants for autumn flowering. They can be obtained in several distinct colours or mixed. Very good for cutting.

Cobaea scandens.—Although this is really a perennial when grown as a greenhouse plant, it may be treated as an annual for the outdoor garden. It is a vigorous climber, reaching a height of 10ft. The flowers are large, bell-shaped and dull purple in colour.

Cosmos.—There is now an early flowering race of *Cosmos* which produces beautiful flowers for cutting. The plants make large spreading bushes about 3ft. high, the blossoms resembling in appearance those of single Dahlias. White, rose and crimson are the colours available. The old late-flowering *Cosmos* is practically worthless.

Dimorphotheca.—Although it has an unwieldy name, this charming annual from Namaqualand ought to be in every garden. The species, *aurantiaca*, has rich orange yellow flowers, in shape like Marguerites, and

the plant seldom grows more than 9in. high. There are hybrids now obtainable, but the colours of these are rather washy. Do not sow until nearly the end of March, and plant in a sunny position.

Annual Dianthi.—These are the so-called Indian or Japanese Pinks. The flowers are large, mostly single, with very fringed petals, and embrace many colours, from pure white to rich brilliant crimson. They thrive best in a sunny position and well drained soil.

Eccremocarpus scaber.—A useful climbing plant with orange scarlet flowers. Should be given a warm position, where it will quickly clothe any rough support.

Kochia trichophylla.—This is often called the Summer Cypress. It quickly forms a neat, bushy plant, resembling in shape a Guardsman's busby. During the summer the foliage is brilliant green, but in autumn this changes to dull red. The plants need plenty of space in which to develop.

Marigolds.—The ordinary Pot Marigold is best treated as a hardy annual, but the African and French kinds should be sown under glass. They are stiff, formal plants, with a pungent odour that is distasteful to some. They are, however, very useful for late autumn effects. The colours are varying shades of yellow. Plants can be had with single or double flowers.

Nemesia.—One of the most beautiful of all annual flowers, and specially suitable for gardens in the Western Counties and in Scotland, where the atmosphere is moist. White, crimson, scarlet, pale blue and primrose yellow colours are now available. They need rich, cool soil, and are best sown in a cold frame. Height from 9in. to 15in., according to the type.

Nicotiana.—The sweet-scented Tobacco Plant (*N. affinis*) has white, very fragrant flowers that are closed during the day, but are delightful in the evening. The newer hybrids embrace several shades of red; they are nearly, but not quite, so fragrant as *affinis*.

Petunias.—Most seedsmen make a speciality of single-flowered Petunias for bedding. Where they can be given rich, well drained soil, these dwarf, branching types are excellent. Seeds of well defined colours, such as rose, white and violet, are obtainable.

Phlox Drummondii.—An old but very beautiful dwarf annual which needs good soil that is well drained. Fireball (bright scarlet) and Snowball (pure white) are both very good. Primrose yellow and violet shades can also be purchased.

Scabious.—The annual Scabious, which must not be confused with the beautiful pale blue perennial Caucasian Scabious, is a great favourite in Scotland. The plants grow from 3ft. to 4ft. high. The best colours are pink, maroon, crimson and white.

Stocks.—The annual Stocks have been very much improved during recent years, and the type known as Intermediate, though rather later flowering than the Ten Week varieties, is much the best. The plants grow about 15in. high, branch freely and continue to produce their fragrant blossoms from early August well into the winter. Pink, white and mauve are the best colours.

Hardy annuals for sowing outdoors will be dealt with in a subsequent article.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IN the immediate heat and dust of battle it is not easy to lay aside the fierce hatreds and passions engendered by the strife and discuss the characteristics of the combatants in the dispassionate temper of Dr. Dryasdust writing 200 years after the event. Especially is this the case because the nations, in addition to pounding their enemies with the richest variety of explosives ever employed in warfare, have also slanged one another in the newspapers to an unprecedented extent. Before coming to a final judgment the historian will have to distinguish clearly between hatreds artificially fomented and hatreds due to race and rivalry. Even in the clangour of the fight certain aspects of national character are flashed upon us. It would probably be admitted by the German foe that the crisis has discovered in France an ardent sacrificial patriotism that has changed even the character of her warfare. Instead of the old gaiety and dash, the play of a brilliant fencer delighting in his rapier, there is the grim care and tenacity of the veteran soldier no longer set on personal distinction, but determined only to make his cause prevail. Japan, the France of the distant Orient, hovers on the outskirts, watchful, efficient, striking hard and promptly when occasion requires. Germany's great qualities have been obscured by an immeasurable egotism. It, indeed, lies at the base of Bernhardt's cry, "World Empire or Downfall." The sons of Albion will be modestly content to let Time write the verdict.

Among the great belligerents there remains to be considered Russia, a country with an interest peculiarly its own. Her alliance with us in a great war is historically novel. We fought her in the Crimea, and, until the later days of Lord Salisbury, looked upon her Eastern policy with mistrust. Over the boundary dispute at Penj-deh even so pacific a Minister as Mr. Gladstone had to ask Parliament for a vote of credit precautionary to an outbreak of war. Now she has become our firm Ally, and we are but slowly getting to know and sympathise with her. Mr. Stephen Graham, whose *Russia and the World* (Cassell) is before us, deserves credit for the important part he has played in helping the two Allies to a real friendship. He is thus turning to good account the extraordinary attraction which has led him again and again to this wonderful land.

When war broke out he was engaged in the most formidable foot journey he has yet undertaken. When the news arrived he was staying in a village of the Altai Mountains, on the confines of China, 1,500 miles from a railway and 4,000 miles from the scene of battle. When the Czar's message arrived a rumour went round, "It is with England," for they did not know that the old hostility had passed away. The opening chapter, in which this is told, is one of the finest in the book, as if the author, as doubtless was the case, has caught the infection of excitement and enthusiasm. No one could possibly have better rendered the movement and stir of assembling Cossacks, the old superstitious ideas and usages, the grief and emotion of the women, the rush of man and horse which followed the command to mobilise.

From remote Mongolia to Moscow arose evidence of a national unanimity which even the most optimistic could not have foreseen. Russia went into the war as joyfully as Germany, and the struggle can scarcely help bringing in its train material and moral advantages. Russia is learning by bitter experience that as long as Germany dominates the Baltic and Turkey commands the Dardanelles, her commerce is at the enemy's mercy. At present she has 10,000,000 quarters of wheat ready to ship, is in urgent need of money, and yet cannot export the surplus of her splendid harvest. But the greatest advantage she is likely to gain is the moral one. Hitherto we have had to speak of "all the Russias," but the war has quickened a new imperial consciousness, and henceforth there will be but one Russia. It will be a huge "all-on-land Empire," illimitable in its natural resources, and possessing the advantage of easier communication between its parts than is possible in our world-scattered dominion.

The message of the book is that we in this country should trust and "love" our Ally. It is erring on the right side to be insistent upon this point. Nothing but ill can follow such declarations as that of Mr. Bernard Shaw: "Russia has been able to set all three Western friends and neighbours, Germany, France and England, shedding rivers of blood from one another's throats." Here the facts are ignored. Germany alone had made adequate preparations for the war, and Russia used every effort to avert it. To make such a statement about our Ally was to sow mischief. Thanks to a little band of interpreters, among whom the writer of this book holds an honoured place, Great Britain is coming to understand and like Russia. No alliance can be real and efficacious without mutual confidence, a truth recognised as keenly by our own Foreign Office as by M. Sazonoff, with whom Mr. Graham had an interesting conversation on the eve of his return from Petrograd. A time, no doubt, will come when out of a brotherhood in arms will come for Russia a feeling as intimate and friendly as that we have now for France. So far the Allies have worked together in harmony, and in view of the hard work yet to be done he deserves well who tries to cement the union. We regard it as a pity that Mr. Graham should join his voice to those who are beginning to clamour for an "honourable" peace with Germany, for a peace not humiliating. Such words are a misuse. What we are fighting for is that posterity should be saved from the menace under which we have lain for a generation. We are fighting for posterity, and, what is more to the point, leaving posterity to pay the greater part of the bill. It behoves us, then, so to deal with Germany that she will not have the power to prepare for another such war, which is a menace to civilisation.

Russia, when peace is attained, will be confronted with many problems, most of them set forth frankly and clearly in this volume. There is the problem of the Jews, the people who in Russia "own no land," and who are, therefore, lacking in at least one strong incentive to patriotism. As Palestine is not unlikely to fall into the hands of the Allies, a plausible

solution is to make it once more a Jewish country. Other problems are presented by the Poles and Finns, and a still more complicated one by finance. No one can doubt the wholesome effect of the Czar's vodka decree; but it has destroyed a great source of revenue for which a substitute will have to be found. And the peasants—are they to be educated or encouraged to stay on the land? Russia could almost supply the whole world with food, and at immense profit, but only so long as labour is inexpensive. Shall she invite her friends and Allies to develop the other enormous natural resources? These are all questions of great importance, and they are discussed with much illumination in this fresh and brilliant book. No one who is desirous of arriving at an intelligent apprehension of the situation now developing can afford to miss it.

The Origins and Destiny of Imperial Britain, by the late J. A. Cramb. (John Murray.)

THIS book, published fifteen years ago, passed unnoticed. Mr. Cramb died in October, 1913; and some lectures on "Germany and England," published in 1914, were reprinted seven times in two months. Since the war began few books have been read and discussed more widely. And there was good reason for this: among English scholars and students Mr. Cramb was almost alone in foreseeing what was to come. Most English writers knew that they had no desire to fight Germany, and gave the Germans credit for similar feelings; but Mr. Cramb, who had studied at Bonn, and was well read in German literature, was convinced that a struggle was inevitable, and had courage to state his opinion. In this respect he deserves to rank with Horace Walpole, who foretold the French Revolution to a generation of disbelievers. The older book is here reprinted, and is sure to find many readers. Like the other, it develops a fatalistic theory of war and conquest—that certain nations, owing to their innate qualities and past history, are untrue to the law of their destiny, if they do not sacrifice everything for the sake of empire. The earlier book asserts this of Britain, as the later book did of Germany. Whether the theory be true or false, we do not believe that the author's vogue will remain at its present height. His way of thinking is too mystical, and his manner of expression is not always happy. Yet he writes with evident sincerity and at times with force. He had a very wide knowledge of history and literature, but it is not clear that his knowledge was exact in all departments. Plutarch is described as "the tutor of Hadrian"; he was not, though a discredited legend calls him the tutor of Trajan. Caesar is always called "Caius Julius." This is unusual and also wrong; there is no such word as "Caius" in the Latin language. Pitt is made to misquote Virgil on page 11, and Æschylus is misquoted on page 16. In spite of such slips, the author will long be remembered, because he made a startling prophecy which was almost immediately proved to be true.

The Influence of King Edward and Other Essays, by Viscount Esher. (John Murray.)

THESE reprinted papers will be read again with great interest. At the same time, it is impossible not to feel that some of them are a little out of date. We know now that some of Lord Esher's opinions were quite wrong, such as that distrust of Germany was but the "nervous apprehension of a few fanatics." We have every reason to hope that others, such as those on sea power and a dominant fleet, were entirely sound; but in either case reality has diminished our taste for the mere speculations of a thinker, no matter how respectable. On the other hand, we welcome and re-read with almost as keen an interest as when it first appeared in the *Quarterly* the admirable essay on the character of King Edward. We marvel again at the treasures of care and thought and conscientiousness on the part of the Royal parents that were lavished on the upbringing of the Prince of Wales: the long, written directions to tutors and equerries, so full of excellent sense and lacking only, as it seems to us now, the saving grace of a sense of humour. Youth was to be one long round of improving occupations, and not one of the "precious hours" was to be wasted: "the only use of Oxford" was "that it was a place for study," and any leisure that there was was to be devoted to "anything that while it amuses may gently exercise the mind." No wonder that the Prince "passively resisted the high pressure" of a life in which "literary relaxation was confined to Gibbon." Equally interesting is Lord Esher's estimate of King Edward's character in later life. His astonishing power of being interested in everything and everybody, his charm and friendliness, his qualities and also his limitations as a ruler at home and a power in European politics, are set out in a style that is both lucid and graceful.

The Man of Iron, by Richard Dehan. (Heinemann.)

THE author of "The Dop Doctor" has many admirers, but she puts their enthusiasm to a somewhat severe test by the 815 closely printed pages of which her new book consists. Doubtless she needed a spacious field in which to work, since she has taken as her subject the Franco-Prussian War, but so prodigal and tempestuous a flood of words is scarcely justified. The hero is a young Englishman, educated at a German University, who becomes a freelance correspondent with the German Army. He has various adventures, in which a villainous Roumanian, who is a Secret Service agent, and a young French lady whom he ultimately marries play leading parts; but the chief interest must be presumed to centre round the historical figures presented. Chief among these are Bismarck and Moltke, and we also have glimpses of several others—von Roon and Thiers, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of the French and the Prince Imperial. It was only last week that we noticed a novel in which Shakespeare and other great Elizabethans walked and talked. Here we have an almost equally ambitious task attempted, and the result produces an equal lack of conviction in the reader's mind. We hear Moltke discoursing on the uses of cavalry, Bismarck discussing with Thiers the ceding of the two provinces, and so forth; but it needs a greater genius

than the author's to make the attempt seem other than presumptuous. Her success lies in giving us some exciting pictures of war. The readiness of the Prussians and the unreadiness of the French are vividly drawn, and Gravelotte is stirring and horrible enough.

Delia Blanchflower, by Mrs. Humphry Ward. (Ward, Lock.)

THIS book affords one curious little piece of evidence of the effect of the war. It deals with the subject of the militant suffragists, and we positively feel as if we were reading an historical novel. When Gertrude Marvell, after setting alight to the beautiful old house of Monk Lawrence, expires amid its flaming ruins, the incident appears as remote as that of Ulrica perishing upon the battlements of Torquilstone, and we might be reading "Ivanhoe" save for the fact that "Ivanhoe" is much better fun. This effect of the war is Mrs. Ward's misfortune; but in any case this book could not have ranked with her best. She knows her business as a storyteller, and she has imagined a situation of considerable possibilities in that of the peaceable country gentleman who has unexpectedly thrust upon him the guardianship of a young heiress of wildly militant tendencies. But neither of these two characters really holds our attention. The man is so invariably generous, good tempered and fair-minded that he is often exasperating. As to Delia herself, we are willing to believe that she was beautiful, in spite of the fashion plate that does duty as frontispiece; but a heroine cannot live by beauty alone. Mrs. Ward is, of course, a leader of the "antis," but she has clearly tried to draw as sympathetic a picture of militantism as any reasonable being could, under the circumstances, expect, and perhaps some of those who differ from her will be surprised to find how far she is prepared to agree with them.

The Full Price, by Lady Charnwood. (Smith, Elder.)

THERE is a conscientious exactitude that often provokes annoyance in the manner in which Lady Charnwood tells the love-story of Margaret Hurst and Lord Shelford, the two principal characters in what must yet be acknowledged to be a novel of considerable attraction. Lord Shelford is a successful politician with a reputation as a heartless philanderer in his dealings with the opposite sex. With no son to succeed him, he determines, on meeting Margaret, a young *ingénue* of some force of character, to make a second marriage, and, with this end in view, proceeds to impress his individuality upon the not unwilling disciple. Obvious as the plot is, the development of Margaret's character saves the situation from a certain unreality; for she is most sympathetically portrayed, her youthfulness and capacity for uncritical idealisation true to temperament and upbringing. But there is much that is inexplicably immature and crude in the book, the dialogue in particular falling far below the level of such work as the clever sketch of Lady Saintsbury; while Roger Bamfield is a marionette almost inconceivably unconvincing.

Years of Plenty, by Ivor Brown. (Martin Secker.)

THE author has set himself the ambitious task of taking his hero in some detail through his time at a Public School and four years at Oxford. He has accomplished it with unflagging spirit and, on the whole, with great success. Our first impulse is to say that nothing else in the book quite comes up to the account of the boy's first term at school. This is quite undeniably admirable, and the descriptions of the end of a football match, and the glorious "ragging" of a rival house on the last night of the half, rank very high indeed in this class of literature. On consideration we are by no means sure that the rest of the book is not just as well done, but the clever young undergraduate is hardly so attractive a creature as the small boy. He sits up into the small hours of the morning discussing everything in heaven and earth, and Mr. Brown knows this kind of talk thoroughly well. Its laudable enthusiasms and curiosities, together with the superficiality and boyishness of many of the judgments pronounced, are very faithfully rendered; but clever undergraduates, from the point of view of those less clever and more aged, sometimes talk a little too much. However, the life and "go" and spirit in the book far outweigh this disadvantage.

The Ancient and Mediæval Architecture of India, by E. B. Havell. (John Murray.)

MR. HAVELL is not an author for people who like trodden ways. He holds and states his views strongly, and does not commonly agree with standard authorities. Indian architecture is a vast subject for the elucidation of which we have hitherto relied on Fergusson. Mr. Havell quotes from him with strong approval: "Architecture in India is still a living art, practised on the principles which caused its wonderful development in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and there, consequently, and there alone, the student of architecture has a chance of seeing the real principles of the art in action." This, however, is regarded as Fergusson's "one vital truth," and all the rest is fallacy, especially his classifications of styles. Mr. Havell's glorification of Indo-Aryan civilisation as seen in the old village council and the village plan, his examination of the rich system of symbolism and the philosophy of temple building, and his survey of Vishnu and Siva temples, fully illustrated, are admirable features of a stimulating and controversial book. We are invited to reject Fergusson's "Indo-Saracenic style" and to minimise the break between Hindu and Muhammadan building caused by the invasion by Islam. At that point Mr. Havell leaves his subject, as he had already covered the later periods in his earlier volume, "Indian Architecture."

Flower of the Moon, by Louise Gerard. (Mills and Boon.)

THERE is a good deal of "scented moonlight" in this book. It drips through the branches of the trees and helps to make a tropical atmosphere in which Whazi, the young Arab, and Flower of the Moon move like wraiths. Whazi, whose imagination has been stirred by the legend of Flower of the Moon, as told by Uhtoo the Snger, happens, in his wanderings, on a tiny girl, clad in a nightgown of filmy lawn, thin as gauze and semi-transparent, and with a sapphire necklace smouldering like blue fire round her shoulders—"tied

to the grating of a lifeboat" under a mango tree. In reality it is Sylvia Markham who has been washed up by the tide from a wreck; but Whazi knows nothing of wrecks, and thinks his dream has come true. He has found Flower of the Moon. Henceforward they subsist mainly on sentiment.

She does embroidery, and listens to the frogs by moonlight, and he adores her in a fond and foolish manner. The most natural figure in the book is Ola, the old negro nurse. She shows a sense of the realities of life which the others seem wholly to lack.

THE WATERLOO CUP.

FEW sports are subject to greater vicissitudes than that of coursing, so many accidents conspiring to confound the prophets who work upon earlier or collateral form; but I take it that this uncertainty adds enormously to the attraction. One never knows quite what may happen. If anything, I suppose, the result of this year's Waterloo Cup, decided last week, was more an open question than usual, at least half a dozen or more puppies, together with several second and third season dogs, being credited with a reasonable chance. If last year's winner, Messrs. Dennis' Dilwyn, had gone to the slips, she would no doubt have been a firm favourite, so excellent was her performance, and consistent, too, one may add, since she had previously put up a record of eighteen out of twenty courses, and had only twice been led to the hare. Yet she was but the second string of her owners. It is interesting to recall the note in the Greyhound Stud Book to the effect that this sterling bitch was one of a litter of nine reared in Kent by Mr. S. M. Dennis. She was so severely knocked about in a kennel scrap that she could not be got fit.

Of the older brigade, Mr. H. Hardy's fawn dog, Hopsack, very naturally had many admirers; but, failing to come up to expectations, he went down in the first round to Major G. Noble's dog puppy, Nip Near, who reached the semi-finals after enjoying the luxury of a couple of byes. Then there was the Duke of Leeds' Leucoryx, who, in spite of lameness, made a gallant fight in the closing stage in 1914. Any hopes that he might put the crown to the ambition of a good sportsman were frustrated on the first day last week, for, after he had beaten Mr. Rogers' Real British in rare style, he managed to lame himself so badly that he could go no further. Lang Syne, Lapal and Lavishly Closed were the runners-up for His Grace at three successive meetings, beginning with 1898; Leucoryx made the fourth finalist from these kennels. Was ever such luck?



WINNING NUMBER, VICTOR IN THE WATERLOO CUP.

If sentiment had the deciding of such matters, there is little doubt that the nation would have plumped as one man for Delver II, the property of the Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces; but, alas! the divider of the last Russian Waterloo Cup could not raise the flag in the first round against Mr. Cuthbert Blundell's Basque, filling the nomination of Mr. J. T. Crossley. The principal meeting in Russia, really called the Parakino Cup, is run under conditions that would seem novel to us, the weather usually being so hot towards the end of May or the beginning of June that a start is made about two o'clock in the morning, finishing about our breakfast time. Hares are kept in an enclosure on the Grand

Duke's estate some two hundred miles from Moscow. His Imperial Highness has imported many British dogs of the best running strains, and he has an English trainer. Dendromys, sire of Delver, went to Russia in exchange for £400; and other dogs known to us that have passed into the Grand Duke's ownership are Such a Surprise and Back to the Land, runner-up for the Plate in 1910.

To come back to our own meeting. On Wednesday none pleased the experts better than Sir R. W. Buchanan-Jardine's Jawleyford, who was made favourite owing to the manner in which he beat Mr. Oscar Asche's Once Australia and Mr. J. R. Dennis' Dubiety; but on Thursday he was knocked out by Mr. H. Brocklebank's Balderdash. Once Australia, it may be recalled, came to us with sound credentials from the Antipodes, and last year won the Plate in a convincing manner.

All the time the ultimate winner, Sir Thomas Dewar's Winning Number, was gaining supporters. Defeating Mr. J. Wyles' Nubia and Mr. H. C. Pilkington's Phidias on Wednesday, on Thursday he proved himself too good for Mr. H. Hardy's Hedda and Mr. Brocklebank's Brummagem. How he disposed of Mr. E. Hulton's Hadfield in the semi-finals, and Mr. M. G. Hale's Happy Challenge in the deciding course, is now a matter of history, and we congratulate Sir Thomas on achieving victory at his first attempt. A. CROXTON SMITH.



HAPPY CHALLENGE, RUNNER-UP IN THE WATERLOO CUP.

THE HALF-BRED SIRE.

[Those of our numerous correspondents whose communications are not printed this week will doubtless find some consolation in reading the following letters whilst exercising patience until the exigencies of space allow the publication of their own views. We shall print as many letters as possible.—Ed.]

FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE HUNTERS' IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.

SIR,—I have read Mr. Hope Brooke's letter in your issue of February 6th with great interest, and although I cannot bring myself to agree with all he writes, yet it is well worth the while of anyone interested in light horse breeding to give his views careful consideration, as they represent the result of the practical efforts of a man who has obviously taken great trouble to produce a stallion suitable to mate with undersized mares. Personally, I am not in favour of violent crosses of blood, but I do agree with Mr. Hope Brooke that if you are going to mate cart-horse blood with clean-legged blood you will be more apt to get a good result by putting a heavy horse to a thoroughbred mare than *vice versa*. But I am entirely against breeding from undersized, weedy mares of any breed.

BREEDING BY SELECTION.

The only sound way to improve the breed of any kind of animal is by selection and by never breeding from a weakling, no matter how good a family it belongs to. Mr. Hope Brooke himself says that "all crosses revert to their original dam," so if any man wishes to mate a heavy horse with a thoroughbred mare, let him take care that that mare is a deep, roomy one on good legs and with true action and good balance. And it is essential she should be absolutely clean bred, for it will need all the excellence of her breeding and shape to counterbalance the many unhunterlike characteristics of the breed with which she is to be mated. I purposely do not say "stallion," for animals do not necessarily reproduce themselves, but they must reproduce the characteristics of their particular breed. Many a valuable heavyweight hunter has been bred this way, although I fancy they are the exceptions that go to justify me in my dislike to such violent crosses. I have been told by men of great experience—Mr. Stokes of Great Bowden among others—that the draught stallion must be smooth over the top of his quarters, *i.e.*, must not have a groove running along his croup. But I am very strongly against the introduction of Shire and Clydesdale blood into hunter stock.

WHY HEAVY HORSES ARE BRED.

For generations they have been bred for the purpose of pushing, to lean their weight forward against their collars. The straight, active hind leg we look for in a hunter is not at all necessary in a draught horse; in fact, I believe I am not wrong when I say that Shire breeders do not like it. Again, the big foot and very slanting pastern is much too exaggerated to be desirable in a riding horse. Just to attain size you run the risk of introducing all these and many other undesirable attributes if you use these heavy horses. And you will also introduce what your eye cannot see—the soft, spongy bone, the soft tendons and tissues and the want of staying power.

TRUE CONFORMATION ESSENTIAL.

Size does not by any means mean weight-carrying power. Many a so-called weight carrier is so inactive and so unbalanced that he cannot carry himself through the deep without floundering, let alone carry anybody on his back. No; what carries weight is a combination of short legs, deep girth, width just behind the withers where the saddle tree rests, strong loins, good hocks and, above all else, balance, activity and courage. Get a Shire or Clydesdale stallion into hunting condition, and how many of these desirable, nay necessary, attributes would he possess? Neither can I allow to pass unchallenged Mr. Hope Brooke's statement that we may infer that the excellence of the heavy weight Irish hunter is derived from the heavy draught blood introduced into Ireland in the middle of the nineteenth century. The excellence of the Irish hunter comes from two things chiefly. One, the original Irish breed of light draught horse, clean and hard of its limbs, wiry and tough and yet big enough to do all kinds of farmwork. Secondly, the equitable climate and warm soil of the principal horsebreeding districts of Ireland, which combine in giving the young horse the best possible chance to develop to the full possibilities of his breeding.

IRISHMEN CURSE.

All Irishmen whom I have ever met who know anything about horses curse the day that either Shires, Clydesdales or hackneys were ever imported into Ireland. Steps are being taken by the Irish Board of Agriculture to resuscitate the original old Irish draught horse, and I most sincerely trust their efforts will meet with success, for I believe that stallions of that breed would get us out of our difficulty in keeping up the robustness and weight-carrying power of our hunters. Mr. Hope Brooke does not approve of the hunter sire bred on the lines approved of by the Hunters' Improvement and National Light Horse Breeding Society. Here again I can agree with Mr. Hope Brooke up to a certain point. I consider a registered hunter sire as a quite valueless animal unless he makes up for the stain in his pedigree, be it ever so slight, by real weight-carrying characteristics. In other words, to be of any use he wants to be a horse that would have been a high class 15st.—16st. hunter if he had been a gelding. If he is that, then I consider him the most useful animal you can have to keep up the weight-carrying characteristics of your stud. Put him to hunter mares of a good stamp and he will breed you fillies of the very stamp suitable to remate with a good thoroughbred horse. His geldings will be of value, and some probably of great value. Put him to strong thoroughbred mares and he will produce you the highest class hunter.

SIR MERRIK BURRELL'S BEST MARE.

The best all-round animal I have ever owned, a dark bay mare called Surprise, very well known in the show ring, and a brilliant 15st. hunter, is by Silver King, a hunter sire of the 16st. hunter type, out of a

thoroughbred mare called My Treasure. She in her turn is the best brood mare I have ever owned, admirably suited to mate with a good thoroughbred horse. You have to go back four generations in Silver King's pedigree before you find the stain, and then the mare is described as "a hunting mare." He has no more bone under the knee than a premium horse would be required to have, but his knees, hocks, forearms, second thighs and width, both meeting you and leaving you, are those of a typical heavyweight hunter. He was bred by Lieutenant-Colonel Zachariah Walker of Acock's Green. Now, I maintain that horses of this type will give you all the extra weight-carrying characteristics you require, will breed truer than the horse of the "violent cross" origin because it is very nearly thoroughbred, and by using him you avoid all the soft bone and tissues and draught characteristics of the heavy breeds.

WHY IRISH HUNTERS ARE GOOD.

To revert to Ireland for a moment and to the question as to why such good heavyweight hunters come from that island, it is as well to realise that for every thoroughbred horse covering half-bred mares there are roughly ten clean-legged stallions more or less of the hunter-stallion type. What makes them so successful in Ireland is that so many of the farmers' mares are very nearly if not quite clean bred. Mr. Hope Brooke asks: "Why not produce a breed of heavyweight hunters that will breed true to type?" This can only be done by breeding from hunters specially selected and by judicious in-breeding to lines of big blood to fix the type, and not by violent crosses. The latter contention is proved by the descriptions he gives of the animals he has bred, *e.g.*, a 15h. 2in. mare mated with a thoroughbred produced a 16h. mare up to 14st., and a horse 15h. 3in. by a half-bred cart-horse out of a Barb mare when crossed with a hansom cab mare produced a 16st. animal. Obviously the offspring could not breed true to their parentage because it was so varying, but just threw back to whatever ancestor's characteristics happened to be predominant. I do not for one moment wish to contend that useful heavyweight hunters cannot be bred by Mr. Hope Brooke's methods; but because Mr. Hope Brooke by using great care and very sound judgment in selecting his parent animals can succeed, that is no reason why people with less sound knowledge will. The danger of introducing draught blood into hunter stock is far too great to ever be countenanced by any authoritative body, either private society or Government department. I am sorry Mr. Hope Brooke has not entered his three-year-old for the London Show. It would have been most instructive, and I am aware of no rule which prevented him from so doing. But if the animal had met with success I think it would have been more due to the shrewdness of its owner in practice than to the correctness of the theory on which it had been bred.—MERRIK R. BURRELL.

FROM MR. DUDLEY WARD.

SIR,—Mr. Hope Brooke's views on hunter breeding are so revolutionary that they are certain to attract much attention. His views are not altogether new to me, and I have given them much thought. But before proceeding to give my opinions of his principles I wish to touch upon one point which seems to be overlooked by all your correspondents upon the question of the shortage of horses. After the war, of course, it will pay to breed the right sort of horse—so long as there is a market for it; but when the war is over and the general shortage created by its demands made good—which should take place in about eight or nine years' time—where will the market be? The demand for horses, apart from the best of them for hunting, will be what it was twelve months ago, and can only be made continual by the means suggested by one of your correspondents in *COUNTRY LIFE* of December 26th last, *viz.*, such a tax upon motor traction as will cause most of those now using it to decide that horse-power is cheaper. The sooner we learn how to breed weight-carrying hunters with anything like certainty the sooner will the demand for this type be satisfied—and the price paid for it reduced. It may, I think, be taken as generally admitted that the average horse bred for a hunter is in need of more bone, more body and shorter legs. On the face of it, we shall not get these desiderata without recourse to some other breed than the racehorse. I am entirely in agreement with Mr. Hope Brooke that the coarseness should come in on the sire's side.

PEDIGREE IN THE MARE.

As he says, the Greeks and Arabs have always laid stress on the importance of pedigree in the mares. Power and courage were imparted to the greyhound by an out-cross of bulldog blood; but a bull-dog was used, not a bull-bitch. I think, moreover, every dog breeder will agree that coarseness in a brood bitch is a damning fault; but many a great stud dog has possessed it. I cannot, however, reconcile myself to the use of a hairy-heeled breed for an out-cross in hunter breeding. Every hunting man of my acquaintance who has known of hunters with cart blood in their pedigree agrees that they may prove admirable nine days out of ten, but when "the run of the season" takes place they are missing at the conclusion. Now, Ireland was famed for its breed of weight-carrying hunters long before "fifty years ago, when a few cart-horses were introduced to raise the size." How were they produced? Surely by the use of the old Irish draught horse—a short and clean-legged, deep-shouldered type, of which several were described and portrayed in the pages of the *Field* some three years ago. That good specimens are scarce now is only too true; but there are enough of them to make a beginning with, seeing that a sire can cover some fifty mares a season; and from the produce it should be possible to pick several colts worth keeping as hunter sires.

THE OLD-FASHIONED HACKNEY.

There is another breed, not so heavy as the old Irish draught horse, and even less numerous, but with infinitely greater weight-carrying power than the modern racehorse—the old-fashioned hackney, which has been bred by the Monson family of Walpole Highway for many generations. There was a full description of this breed in the *Foxhound* about two years ago; but for those who have not seen it I must say that the breed is in no way like the

modern hackney of the show-ring, with extravagant action, but is essentially a saddle horse, with shoulders, staying power and courage. It should be borne in mind that the hackney of 100 years ago or more was usually a very fair hunter and in general use among cross-country men, and that it was not until Mr. Meynell had the Quorn Hounds and bred them much faster than they or any other pack had ever been before that blood hunters were needed and recourse was had to the racehorse of that day for a sire. That either of the breeds I have mentioned above would prove a much better out-cross than the hairy-heeled Clydesdale I am convinced; and perhaps the Cleveland Bay horse should not be overlooked. At least he has a real good colour, with no white; and generally, I believe, he is on short legs, and up to much more weight than the average Premium horse; but I do not know much of the breed.

Mr. Hope Brooke has referred to the sires registered by the Hunters' Improvement Society, and in the main I think his criticisms are justified, though I know of one horse which provided a striking exception, *but he would not under their new rules be accepted for registration.* In their desire to eliminate coarse blood the society has decreed that the male produce—by thoroughbred or registered stallions—of (many of) the registered mares are ineligible for the breed register. A curious state of things, surely. I firmly believe that if other animals of mixed blood can be bred to type, weight-carrying hunters can: it is merely a question of judicious selection, time and money. The difficulty of riding stallions in the hunting field in these days of crowds is a very serious drawback, and brings about the castration of many an Alarm and Broadwood who might otherwise do a deal of good.—DUDLEY C. WARD.

FROM A DEVONSHIRE BREEDER.

SIR,—In twenty-five years' experience of hunter breeding I have found, like many other breeders, that by using thoroughbred stallions each generation is likely to be up to less weight than the preceding one. Thoroughbreds are bred for racing, and though occasionally one may have the substance of a weight carrying hunter, yet he is, so to speak, a freak, and his stock are likely to throw back to their very light weight ancestors.

THE DANGEROUS CART HORSE.

It would be dangerous to get a strain of cart-horse blood into one's hunter stock. Cart-horses have never been bred for riding purposes or for fast work, and of all breeds are the least adapted for it. Probably the quickest way of establishing a breed of weight carrying hunters that would breed true to type would be to use hunters on both sides, and select from the produce for breeding stock for each next generation. In the first instance, foals would have to be selected, bred from thoroughbred sires and really good weight carrying hunter mares, and kept entire. They would probably have still more quality, though less substance, than their dams. Then by mating these again with good weight carrying hunter mares, and having no further recourse to thoroughbred sires, it should be possible gradually to fix the type, always breeding from the selected progeny both for sire and dam. The old rule of breeding, that like produces like or the likeness of some ancestor, is the safe one to go by. After each successive generation bred only from selected parents of the right type, the chance of a throw-back to a wrong type becomes less, and at last is practically eliminated and the type fixed. It seems only common-sense to use as foundation stock on both sides individuals of the type one is aiming at.

A BREED OF WEIGHT CARRIERS.

Once a pure breed of weight carrying hunters were established good saleable horses might be got from any useful riding mare by a stallion of that breed; and, moreover, the pure bred stallions and mares would fetch high prices for export as pure bred breeding stock. A valuable foreign market would, no doubt, arise once an exclusive stud book were begun. As the Hunters' Improvement Society is not establishing a breed of hunters distinct from lightweight racehorses, I venture to suggest that the time has come to start a weight carrying hunters' society to evolve a pure breed on the lines mentioned.—C. M.

FROM A HUNTER JUDGE.

SIR,—I have read Mr. Hope Brooke's letter, also the others it has brought forth. One question: What do we want to breed? I always think the 14st. hunter that can gallop and jump and go on doing both is a horse that cannot be beaten. If he can do this, he can do anything that any other horse living can do, except hold back a heavy load going down hill, and for this, solid weight is all that is required.

WORKING THE YOUNG HUNTER.

That he does not do the hundred and one jobs that other horses do is simply because he is not generally made to do so when young. A 14st. blood hunter that has had the advantage of starting life "in the chains" is always much better for it. For twenty years I have ridden well over 14st. During that period I have ridden horses bred in every conceivable way and met comparatively nice horses got in almost all of them. At the same time I have never found any horse that could touch the clean "blood 'em," and failing that, the best were those that were nearest blood on the side that was not clean bred. No breeder of any stock ever uses half bred stuff on both sides, and we cannot do it with hunters.

DON'T BREED FROM WEEDS.

It is unwise ever to try to counteract a "weed" by using "quantity" as opposed to "quality." A "weed" should never be bred from. *But people mix up weeds and small horses.* The best brood mares I have ever seen, as brood mares, were not big mares. I do not agree with Captain Phipps Hornby. It is "theory" that big mares mated with big horses produce big stock. In practice I have never found it so and rarely seen it so. If you want a brood mare that is going to produce you weight carrying hunters, look for a right shaped one (this needs no exemplification); then see that she has a long belly line and that her four pegs are stuck on outside her. The horse to put to her is the thoroughbred horse, even the biggest scarecrow in the world, a misshapen little weed perhaps, anything so long as he is thoroughbred; but it must be known that he is getting 14st. hunters

out of such mares, and there are such. I would always rather see a horse's stock than see him. If unable to judge by results, horses of the make of Birk Gill and Gilgandra are the sort. The above is not theory; it is the result of personal observation in both breeding and hunting them, and in watching other people's efforts.—SOLDIER-SPORTSMAN.

FROM MAJOR J. L. NICKISSON.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the letters now appearing in your valuable paper regarding light horse breeding, and especially as regards the hunter sire.

THE HUNTER SOCIETY'S "HALF BRED."

Your reference to him as the half bred sire is, I think, misleading and very often a stigma on the animal. By the rules and regulations laid down by the Hunters' Improvement Society as to his breeding he must at least be three-quarters thoroughbred. If the supply of sound thoroughbred stallions with make and shape were available in anything like sufficient numbers the *raison d'être* of the hunter sire would disappear. But their numbers are woefully deficient, and the cart-horse, hackney and Suffolk Punch are altogether wrong. To create a new stamp is always a hard and uphill job, with countless disappointments and much discouragement, and especially is this the case where, as in the present instance, we are suffering from the sins of our forefathers, whose initial start was wrong. If it is true that there are horses for courses, so is it equally true that there are hunters for countries. The big blood hunter that rejoices in the big grass pastures of the Quorn would be just as much out of place in an enclosed, trappy, heavy bank and ditch country as would probably the thick-set, stuffy horse which is so admirably suited by such conditions. Faddists in all spheres of life are to be deplored, and always do more harm than good. I think most breeders are at one in maintaining that the mare is a greater factor than the horse; that it is necessary to supplement the thoroughbred by a hunter sire with bone and weight, stamina, and, above all, courage, and, moreover, prepotent enough to stamp his make and shape and good qualities on his offspring, and so to produce stock true to type. Many are striving for this ideal; true it is a long time coming, but Rome was not built in a day, and of its ultimate advent I have no manner of doubt. One word in conclusion.

THE FOREIGN STIMULUS.

Without the stimulus of foreign buyers light horse breeding would have been in a sorry plight. In ordinary peace times the War Office or Government were in a position to offer but very meagre inducements to encourage light horse breeding, and how this foreign demand will affect the industry after the war is over remains to be seen. Horses, however, the country must have, and for the balanced, good-looking weight carrier there will always be a keen demand. I do not agree with Mr. Pilliner as regards the mares sent back from the front and placed under the care of the Board of Agriculture to be sold to would-be breeders. With very few exceptions all were sizeable, all had good backs and shoulders, and most had bone, while all, of course, were free from hereditary disease. Their condition when I looked them over just after arrival was, naturally, very poor, and in several I thought the fetlocks a bit coarse; but, as I said, taken all round they were a very useful lot, and I believe averaged very satisfactory prices at public auction.—J. L. NICKISSON (Major).



THE CRITICISED BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MARE.

[The purchaser of the 72-guinea mare which was criticised by Mr. Pilliner and defended by Mr. Sheppard has been kind enough, in response to our request, to send us a photograph. Our readers now have the opportunity of judging for themselves. Her new owner writes that she is 16h. 0½in., and not 16h. 2in., has been out hunting, and is wonderfully fit.—ED.]

A POSTSCRIPT FROM SIR HUMPHREY DE TRAFFORD.

SIR,—In my letter, which is published in your paper of February 13th, I did not intend to point out the way to go about breeding hunters, although I mentioned I have had several good hunters and stayers bred with cart blood in them; I was referring to breeding utility horses from light, weedy mares. If I were going to breed hunters I should certainly not think of using any but thoroughbred horses. I am going to breed this next season from every mare I have, and have already selected my thoroughbred sires. To my mind the most difficult part about breeding hunters is to get suitable mares and at the same time know how they are bred. This it is almost impossible to get at.—H. F. DE TRAFFORD.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As one of those past presidents of the Cambridge Union who still retain their affection for, and interest in, the Society, may I say how much I appreciate your reference to the centenary of the Union? There is, however, one aspect of the value and importance of the Union which is sometimes lost sight of. I refer to its value as a training ground for those who are in future years to take part in the public life of the country. The Union debates are valuable not merely as affording the means of spending a pleasant hour or two once a week, but rather as giving an opportunity of bringing to light the latent eloquence which only needs a little encouragement to discover itself. For this reason I regret to observe a tendency to restrict the debates more or less to selected speakers. Sometimes when revisiting the Alma Mater I drop in to the Union on the night of a debate and from a quiet corner recall the stirring scenes of days, alas! long gone by. It is true I may have been unfortunate in the occasion of my visits, but generally the debate has been confined to one or more of the officials, and very little opportunity given to the ordinary members to take part in the discussion. Looking back upon the past I can recall the names of several who have gained renown on the platform, in the House of Commons, or at the Bar, who in the Cambridge Union made the discovery that they possessed the gift of eloquence. For the sake of those who have no chance of becoming selected speakers I would plead for greater opportunity of showing what they can do. From my own experience, I know of nothing connected with the life at the University to which I owe a deeper debt of gratitude than to the Cambridge Union.—A. G. TWEEDIE, President, October, 1877.

[We have much pleasure in publishing Mr. Tweedie's appreciative letter, though his impression of the Union of to-day does not altogether appear to coincide with that of Dr. Tanner, the writer of the article on the Centenary.—Ed.]

PRAIRIE GROUSE IN WINTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The prints enclosed show the prairie sharp-tailed grouse in winter, and were taken near Wauchope, Saskatchewan, in January. We keep food scattered round for the birds, and often have fifteen or twenty feeding within five or six feet of the windows. I had tried frequently during the last two



SUNNING ITSELF IN THE SNOW.

years to photograph these birds perched in the trees, but did not succeed until quite recently. The particular picture of the grouse on a branch that I am sending was taken by my wife among the trees at the back of the house. The birds seem impervious to cold, and sun themselves in the morning sunshine like domestic fowls do in summer, although the mercury may be many degrees below zero.—H. H. PITTMAN, Saskatchewan, Canada.



WAITING TO BE FED.

LARK SINGING IN KENSINGTON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A lark was singing above this house between 9.30 and 10 on February 5th. Though I have seen swifts and even a pheasant here, I never before heard a lark here.—SYDNEY MORSE, 14, Airlie Gardens, Campden Hill, Kensington.

WESTMINSTER HALL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The positions of the shadows on the picture of "Westminster Hall in the Eighteenth Century," reproduced in COUNTRY LIFE of January 23rd, show that the scene is there depicted in the early morning; and, moreover the shadows are also indicated of the houses which ran along the southern side of Bridge Street, thus circumscribing the limits of Palace Yard—as we know it now—and impoverishing the perspective of Westminster Hall. As Mr. John Hunt, Town Clerk of Westminster, kindly reminds me, these houses, and, in fact, the entire surroundings, are clearly shown on R. Horwood's large "Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and Parts adjoining," published 1794-97.—J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

"LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The "ode" on the tombstone of Deborah Collins, given by your correspondent in your issue of February 13th (page 223), is from a poem by Charles Wesley, the first line of which is, "Ah, lovely appearance of death!", and was included by John Wesley in the Methodist Hymn Book in 1779; but it is not in the present Wesleyan Hymn Book.—T. L.



NOT THE WAY OF THE RED GROUSE.

BIRDS IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

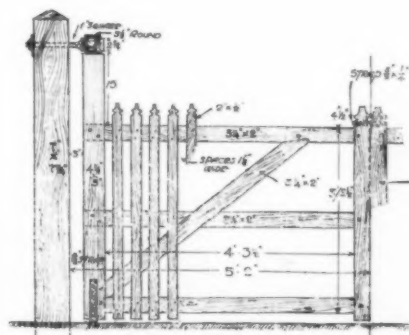
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Here, in an island, one constantly finds the gulls taking up their quarters for the day in the very centre of it. Yesterday, when out walking, I glanced up and saw, as I thought, a large, dark aeroplane move across a wide patch of blue. But the (not unexpected) aeroplane turned out to be a high flying, large flock of seagulls. Owing to some chance of shading (perhaps they shadowed each other, so closely did they fly), they looked from the distance nearly black. They almost immediately thinned out into a long sweeping line and dropped earthwards, flying in haphazard fashion about ten abreast. Upon nearer view their white plumage flashed and glistened in the sunlight. Suddenly a flight of starlings burst out from somewhere, like submarines, and dived under the great seabird fleet. Whether the smaller flocks of birds can be excited or annoyed by the bigger, I do not know; but quite recently I saw exactly the same thing happen when the huge flight of island rooks was returning to roost in the woods which, since time immemorial, they have chosen for this purpose. The starlings on that occasion, numbering about fifty, shot out and back from their own especial little wood, with the swiftness of a stab, as the bigger birds, thousands strong, slowly lumbered overhead. The gulls often wander over the meadows foraging. The effect of the numerous little white bodies moving simultaneously forward in the same direction is most curious; it is as if white feathers were being blown across the meadow, when viewed from the distance. But it was after the heavy rainfalls of about a month ago, when banks and hedgerows were pouring out water from their newly channelled miniature waterways and the low-lying fields were in flood, that the seagulls were inland, and yet in their element! About two miles from here a body of water collected in a meadow; it lay like an oval lake. To see the gulls there by the hundreds on a sunny morning was a sight! All the green of the meadow was flecked with their whiteness, thick as daisies of spring or snowflakes of winter, while the temporary lake bore scores of little swimmers on its bosom.—A. HUGHES.

THE FIVE-BARRED GATE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In response to the appeal for "drawings with figured sizes of genuine specimens" of field gates, made in the letter from Mr. Quennell, published in



A FRENCH FIELD GATE.

your issue of February 13th, I beg to send you a figured sketch of a type of gate very different from anything I have ever seen in any part of these islands. I sketched this near Tancarville, in the Department of Seine Inférieure. While lacking the play of line one gets in the traditional oaken gates so justly eulogised by Miss Jekyll, I venture to say the gate here shown, despite its uncompromising rigidity of outline, has yet some merit, and admirably fulfils its purpose. The French have always been noted for their scientific carpentry, and whether it be colossal pieces of framing, such as those of the roofs over the vaultings of Amiens Cathedral, or the wooden spires of humble village churches, it always arrests attention, and invariably one finds it admirably designed and put together. So here, in the case of this gate, it is hung, folding to minimise the necessity for the use of large timber (the top rail, for instance, is only 3½ in. by 2 in., and the brace is of the same scantling), and it is sheeted with pales spaced about 1½ in. apart, so as not merely to keep fowls either in or out as required, but to afford no facilities for trespass.—GEORGE HORNBLLOWER.

LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS UNDER WAR CONDITIONS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—You may perhaps think the enclosed photograph of sufficient interest to yourself and your readers to be printed. It shows the Principal Keeper of that famous British lighthouse, the Bell Rock, and was taken when he called on me a few weeks back. He and his fellow keepers are all great admirers of COUNTRY LIFE. His rank as Principal is shown by the two badges on the lapels of his coat. Formerly a velvet collar was worn, but this distinction, somewhat unsuitable for men much exposed to the weather, was abandoned some time since in favour of the present badge. It bears a lighthouse in the centre, wreathed with thistles, and the letters "P. K." below. The buttons and the cap badge are the same for all ranks; the button has a lighthouse, buoy and beacon, with the motto "In salutem omnium" on the upper portion, and the words "Northern Lighthouses" below; the cap badge has a lighthouse and "N. L." My friend's position is hardly enviable just now. Since September his light, with that of other East Coast lighthouses, has been extinguished by an order of the Admiralty, and is only shown when required on special occasions for naval purposes. Yet the men still remain upon the lighthouse, there being difficulties in the way of taking them ashore and, for the time, abandoning the light. When Rudyerd's Eddystone Lighthouse was being built two centuries ago we were at war with France, yet Louis XIV was highly indignant with French naval officers who captured some of those employed upon the work, ordered their immediate release, and forbade all interference with those connected with English lighthouses.

"I am at war with England, but not with humanity," was the angry exclamation of that magnanimous if extravagant monarch. Unhappily, our foe to-day can hardly echo the French King's proud boast.—ARTHUR O. COOKE.

[We are obliged to our correspondent for a very interesting letter, to which, however, the photograph adds very little, so we have not published it.—ED.]

"RUN THIS WAY."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—When the war is over we shall look at some of our reminiscences on films and plates with fresh, happy humour. This very ominous one—the



IF THE GERMANS LAND.

first of its kind I have seen, though I have been in several East Anglian villages since the outbreak of the war—is unpleasantly suggestive. On house walls, meadow gates, park trees, long white arrows are painted, standing out with sinister distinctness. Women look with a thrill and men with a sceptic laugh—that is no laugh at all—but children, in that innocent way they have of making distasteful truths apparent, have defied misinterpretation by scrawling beneath the arrow in white chalk their own artless construction, "Run this way."—ELIZABETH KIRK.

A PHOTO FOR THE FRONT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am enclosing a picture which tells its own tale —(MRS.)

PERCY WALLIS.

BLUE TITS.

[THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of a blue tit, or titmouse, which perhaps you would care to use for the "Correspondence" column of COUNTRY LIFE. I live on the outskirts of the city, and do not know very much about birds, but I have been very interested in watching their movements during the last week or two. I have seen three of the tits altogether, and between them they have eaten the whole of the kernel of a coconut in less than six weeks. Last week I hung out a piece of suet attached to a bit of stout wire, and the birds' movements were so interesting to me that I decided to try to photograph them. I set up the camera near the branch where hung the suet, and tied a piece of thread to the trigger of the shutter. The thread passed through a screw-eye put into a short post which had been stuck firmly in the ground, and was brought to a place of concealment. The



THE GIRL HE LEFT BEHIND HIM





SNAPPED AS IT WAS FEEDING.

of the photographs, at any rate, shows very well the characteristic position of the bird when feeding.—W. J. CHERRY, Birmingham.

THE FARMER'S DEFENCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your leading article of February 13th gives an impression to the uninitiated that farming at this moment is a little Eldorado, with the farm labourer left out in the cold. Now, I want to do my best to remove that impression. Perhaps I had better begin by saying that I farm 570 acres as a tenant farmer; that this letter is not a grumble, but a plain statement of facts; that I have sold wheat up to 57s. a quarter, which is a very nice price, and still have some to sell; and, lastly, that I, in common with my neighbours hereabouts, have raised my wages. It is quite true that wheat is up to 60s. in some places, that oats are dear and that beef is 6s. 2d. to 6s. 4d. a stone. But let us look at the other side of the picture. We all use lots of cake and feeding stuffs nowadays, for the stock will not do without it. In my own case my feeding stuffs bill and my rent are just about equal in an average year, and on many farms nowadays the feeding stuffs bill exceeds the rent. Here are a few prices at my station this time last year and now:

	February, 1914.				February, 1915.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	
Linseed cake	8	5	0	11	5	0	
Cotton cake	5	10	0	6	16	3	
Maize meal	6	0	0	9	5	0	
Bran	5	5	0 (at my door)	7	12	6	
Sharps	6	10	0 (at Southampton)	8	10	0	
Superphosphates (30 p.c.)	2	15	0	Nearly	4	0	0

All seeds are dearer; in many cases doubled. It is true beef is dearer, but with linseed cake, cotton cake and maize meal at present prices, and a shortage of roots in many places, I fail to see fabulous profits. Mutton is just about the same as last year—7s. a stone for the best, 6s. 8d. for larger sheep; the difference is in the price of cake! What a pity we have lost that good old sort of Hampshire sheep my old mentor used to talk about, that got fat on hay and turnips alone. I wonder if they really did! Good hay £4 5s. to £4 10s. on rail—very little to sell owing to the drought; many of us have made £5 10s. and over in the piping times of peace. Oats 36s. a quarter; 40s. for seed oats, if you have any to sell, but many large farmers about here have not enough to feed their horses round the year, for owing to the drought in summer and storms at harvest the yield is very light. Straw 50s. a ton on rail. It is, perhaps, as well some things have turned up trumps this year! Lots of barley hereabouts was three sacks and a sack of tail to the acre. There have been some good prices for those who could afford to hold, but what of the many who have to sell on harvest to meet bills and rent? For your writer to say the farmer receives no harm if wheat is 30s. a quarter is nonsense. What the farmer does with wheat at 30s. is to grow just enough to get straw for thatching and no more. Then there is that most important branch of farming, milk selling (I should state at once that out of seventy head of horned stock I have exactly two dairy cows for myself and my hands, and never was so thankful as this year). Prices were made at the October contracts, and the buyer holds you, but the cake merchant will not drop back his prices for that. I hear one "generous" firm of milk buyers in

shutter was set and the dark slide opened, and after waiting a little time out of sight of the birds a small mirror, fixed at an angle, showed the tit, with its short, jerky flight, approaching by a circuitous route (for they seem very timid birds) to the branch. When the bird was in the position I wished a strong, steady pull of the thread released the shutter and a photograph obtained. Of course, I had a number of failures, but I think one

London offer 1d. a gallon rise to their farmers above the minimum quantity on contract till May Day; and then there is the shortage of milkers. So I do not fancy the dairy farmers are making fortunes. Now, I have not written this because I think, or I want other people to think, that the men have not been entitled to a rise; I am glad they have got one, for as one in daily contact with them I know the struggle the rise in prices has produced. The price of milling offals has caused many a cottager not to keep a pig this year who always did so before—to take only one little instance. But I do want to disabuse your readers of any notion that all farmers are on "Tom Tiddler's ground" at this moment, and that their men are getting no share of what may be going. The case of the forties with an overstocked labour market and a rotten poor law system is now beside the point, and I sometimes think it would show good sense on the part of the critics if they ceased to continually bring up against the farmer a system three-quarters of a century old, and which no person farming at the present day can have had anything to do with, let alone be responsible for. At least, such is the humble opinion of—A HAMPSHIRE FARMER.

[Our correspondent's protest is reasonable, and it is true that the profits of the farmer are diminished by the enhanced price of feeding stuffs. We are glad he, with his neighbours, has raised wages. The argument used in our leader was only that if agriculture showed profits on war prices—and then it must in spite of dear feeding stuffs—the labourer should benefit in his degree.—ED.]

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AGRICULTURE.
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In COUNTRY LIFE of January 30th your writer of Farm Notes raises the question of milkers, and writes that the problem might be solved by inducing women to undertake the work. It may interest your readers that in spite of all that may be said and written about the unwillingness of women to undertake farm work, it is not so in this neighbourhood, as the enclosed photographs will show. The farmer's wife, milk pail in hand, milked the cows every day until forced to give up owing to increasing years. Many farmers' daughters turn out not only to milk but to make hay and harvest corn, as may be seen by the photographs. Likewise the lads, mostly in



THE CHILDREN HELPING.

holiday time, as witness the snapshot taken of the boys dragging the turnip drill. With the present shortage of labour there is no doubt that both women and boys will be called upon to do a good deal of the work that has in former years been done by men. That they can and will do it anybody who has travelled in this part of rural England will have seen what is a common thing, lads and lassies taking their share of the day's work on a farm during the busy times.—E. A. GREEVERS.



WOMEN HARVESTERS.